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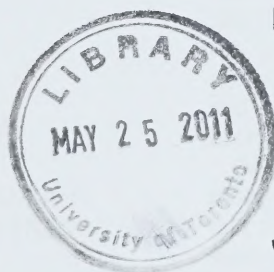
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**Legislative Assembly
of Ontario**

Second Session, 39th Parliament

**Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario**

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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Tuesday 17 May 2011

Mardi 17 mai 2011

Speaker
Honourable Steve Peters

Président
L'honorable Steve Peters

Clerk
Deborah Deller

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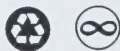
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 17 May 2011

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 17 mai 2011

The House met at 0900.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Good morning. Please remain standing for the Lord's Prayer, followed by the non-denominational prayer.

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ONTARIO FOREST TENURE MODERNIZATION ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 SUR LA MODERNISATION DU RÉGIME DE TENURE FORESTIÈRE EN ONTARIO

Mr. Gravelle moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 151, An Act to enact the Ontario Forest Tenure Modernization Act, 2011 and to amend the Crown Forest Sustainability Act, 1994 / Projet de loi 151, Loi édictant la Loi de 2011 sur la modernisation du régime de tenure forestière en Ontario et modifiant la Loi de 1994 sur la durabilité des forêts de la Couronne.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Debate?

Hon. Michael Gravelle: I am truly honoured to be here today to begin debate on third reading of Bill 151, legislation that would enable us to modernize the system that governs how public forest resources are made available to private companies and who manages our crown forests; in other words, our forest tenure system.

This bill is crucial to the economic health of so many northern and rural communities across the province. A modernized forest tenure system would create more flexibility, it would allow us to respond to our fast-changing economic environment, and it would enable us to put our wood and the people of Ontario to work. This legislation would indeed enable us to achieve those goals.

The proposed legislation and commitment to modernization is an extremely strong sign of this government's confidence in the future of forestry in Ontario. The value of our forests to the province and Ontarians is absolutely undeniable. With 85 billion trees, our forests represent 2% of the world's total. And 80% of the 71 million hectares of forested land in Ontario is publicly owned. The government of Ontario oversees the management of all these crown forest lands.

Forestry is a key economic driver in the province, supporting almost 260 Ontario communities, and many of those communities are highly dependent on forestry

jobs for their survival. And while the importance of the sector remains vital, there is also no denying the setbacks that we have seen in recent years. Mills have been closed or idled, and certainly jobs have been lost. Despite that, our commitment to the forestry sector remains extremely firm. Since 2005, we have made available more than \$1.1 billion to support the forestry sector through programs like the forest sector prosperity fund and the loan guarantee program, also the wood promotion program, the northern pulp and paper electricity transition program and, of course, its successor, the northern industrial electricity rate program and many more.

We want the forest sector to be able to adapt to change. We want it to thrive in the face of the challenges that they have. With that as our desire, the current tenure system, which prescribes how companies obtain crown wood in this province, also needs to change.

Although our current forest tenure system has changed over the years, one of its basic tenets—that, in exchange for a long-term wood supply, primary wood-using mills owned by private companies have responsibility for and strong influence over the management of Ontario's public forest control—has not been revised for many decades. In good times, when the mills were profitable, the old system worked well enough, I believe. But the economic recession has had a significant impact on Ontario's forestry sector and on northern Ontario's economy.

In a letter to me, and copied to the standing committee, one forestry company said recently that, "The current model of embedded business interests and competitors is costly, disruptive, combative and unsustainable," from a business perspective. When mills were idled or closed, it meant that no one was using the wood, with limited opportunities for new entrants. You can be sure there were new entrants who were asking for wood and who were keenly interested in investing in northern Ontario. The fact is, the current system just doesn't meet our needs any longer.

By modernizing the system that makes crown forest resources available to the industry, our goal is to protect and create jobs, attract new investment and make Ontario more competitive, while ensuring that Ontario's forests continue to be managed sustainably. Bill 151 enables us to do this. It is a chance to make the allocation of Ontario's wood more responsive to market demands, to move toward a more competitive market system and to certainly create new opportunities for entrepreneurs.

Bill 151 would allow the province to move forward with two new governance models developed in collabora-

tion with industry, stakeholders and aboriginal communities. One of them is called local forest management corporations, and the second governance model we're calling the enhanced shareholder sustainable forest licences. Both models would make it easier for new entrants to participate and for aboriginal and local communities to be involved in and benefit from the sector. Certainly that was a message we heard consistently from our extensive consultations. While there clearly continue to be debates over the mechanics of the change, I think I feel comfortable saying that there is a strong consensus on the need for responsible and measured change.

We've had years of dialogue across the north. By the way, we've made substantial modifications to our original plan based on the discussions and consultations we've had, and we've worked closely with industry to accommodate its concerns.

For example, to address concerns about the benefits of the local forest management corporations, we've amended the bill to limit it to two pilot LFMCs for the first five years and to require that there is a review of those first two LFMCs and other tenure arrangements before establishing more. It's a very important amendment we brought forward on the basis of concerns expressed by industry in particular.

To address concerns—and there were concerns expressed—that the government's commitment to move toward the enhanced shareholder sustainable forest licence model was not visible in Bill 151, we have put forward amendments to the bill to allow for the cancellation of various wood supply instruments for the purpose of establishing an enhanced shareholder SFL. In direct response to concerns raised by the forest industry and various communities, we have made other amendments on the timber licence cancellation provisions to provide greater certainty around its application and use. Again, we are keen to work closely with industry to help us move forward together.

In terms of that particular measure, and to be quite specific, we've deleted a provision that would have allowed the government to develop further grounds for timber licence cancellation through a regulation. We've also improved the wording for cancellation in circumstances of wood hoarding, following input from a forest industry working group and others. Again, one of our goals is to see that wood hoarding is not a reality in the future. May I say, we've also added a very important right: One of our amendments is a right of representation in that provision.

0910

I think I need to say at this point—perhaps it's a bit harsh, but I think it's true: It probably wouldn't matter to some how we amended the bill. A significant number, I think, probably felt they wanted to stay with the status quo. It was a system that worked well for them and left them in a position to control that wood. It's also fair to say that it's not surprising, and perhaps it's even understandable, that some do fear change. Some are seeking more delay, and some are certainly very aggressive in

arguing further interests. That's fair game, but we feel strongly that this was a measure that we needed to move forward on.

I guess it's also worth saying that our government could have sat back; we could have done nothing while the forest sector continued its decline. Instead, we made the determination that the status quo was not an option, as we felt that the forest sector was simply not going to improve on its own under the present system. So our government stood up and we took the bold step to modernize Ontario's forest tenure system—again, very careful to do it in a balanced and measured way, with an extraordinary level of consultation with industry, with communities and with their aboriginal leadership. From my perspective, to not support this legislation is to not support the people of northern Ontario. To not support this legislation is to stifle growth in the forestry sector.

The reality is, we committed to proceeding with this transformation a couple of years ago, and we are fulfilling that commitment. We have a very strong responsibility to the people of Ontario. This is a crown resource. It is the people's resource.

Despite what you may have heard, I can assure you that there is indeed significant industry support for this bill. It was made clear that by putting in the needed amendments, many industry leaders can and do indeed support this legislation. We have heard from both individuals and companies that recognize that change is necessary. They agree with the need for that change and they do support this legislation.

Certainly, there is a lot of work left to do to further develop the details and the implementation plans before a new tenure system could be put in place. We recognize that. This is a significant change, and it will take time. It's important for me to say that it is very much our intention and our plan to work with industry, to continue to work with industry, to continue to work with municipalities and other stakeholders and our aboriginal communities to ensure that this happens.

Working together, this new tenure modernization bill and, may I say, the provincial wood supply competitive process would support new investment in the forestry sector while creating and sustaining jobs across the province. In fact, the wood supply competition was created in the interim, in the short term, to put wood and people back to work. We have seen that, during our very tough economic times, in essence about half of our wood supply was not being used. Through the wood supply competition to date, we have been able to announce that more than 3.4 million cubic metres of wood per year will be put to use.

Businesses are creating and protecting good jobs. As a result of the announcement, so far we are creating and retaining more than 1,500 of them. They are expanding their existing operations. Others are establishing new enterprises.

We don't have time to go through all the announcements related to that, but there are some really good ones. They're all great, but there are some particularly telling

ones. How about a family-owned sawmill like Garden Lake Timber near Thunder Bay? It has been in business for just over 30 years and never had a confirmed wood supply. Now they do, and they're able to create some more jobs at that important company.

Whitesand First Nation, north of Thunder Bay, has plans to build a sawmill, a three-megawatt cogeneration facility and a plant to manufacture clean-burning wood pellets. We were able to provide them with a wood allocation that was crucial to them moving forward.

In our announcement a couple of weeks ago—actually, maybe 10 or 12 days ago—a leading-edge clean energy solutions company called Rentech is going to build a plant in White River to produce biodegradable, low-carbon synthetic jet fuel—the first commercial plant of its kind. That almost defines the innovative proposals that I think we were looking for and hoping to see.

Those are just a few examples. I can certainly give many others, as can my colleagues from northern Ontario. But that gives us a good sense of the good things that can happen when we make unused wood available.

There's no question that the wood supply competition process was long, it was complicated, it was challenging, and it continues to be. But what we look at now in terms of our legislation today is to imagine the benefits for Ontarians if we're able to get approval for Bill 151 and a modernized tenure system that would see unused wood more quickly and consistently made available to support new and existing businesses. We believe strongly that it's time to act. We need this change now to create jobs and opportunities in Ontario's forest sector. It's time to support this bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Randy Hillier: It's too bad that the minister didn't give us a few more examples. He did have another seven minutes left on the clock, and I would have been glad to hear some of those other examples had he had them available.

It was interesting listening to the minister. He talked about the industry's support for this bill. I know that the minister wasn't at the committee hearings, hearing from industry and the municipalities in northern Ontario. But I guess I must say that the minister probably can't see the opposition through the trees on this bill. There certainly is significant opposition to this bill—well-founded and well-justified opposition to this bill.

Over the last eight years, under Dalton McGuinty's watch, forestry in this province of Ontario has been decimated. High hydro prices and overregulation have contributed to the loss of over 60 timber mills and the loss of over 40,000 forestry jobs. Instead of helping northern foresters, Premier McGuinty's government seems hell-bent on causing more damage to the industry.

Last month, Premier McGuinty's Liberals introduced the Forest Tenure Modernization Act, which will hurt foresters even further. The bill will replace sustainable forestry licences with unaccountable and bureaucratic forestry LHINs. It will allow the minister to cancel

forestry licences with no compensation, no warning and no reason. Contrary to the minister's statements, that provision still remains within the bill and has caused significant fear and uncertainty in the industry.

When stakeholders like the Ontario Forest Industries Association and the Ontario Bar Association said that the McGuinty Liberals were going to destroy the forest sector by throwing out the rule of law, the McGuinty Liberals on the committee cancelled their northern committee delegations. Last month, I tabled letters in the committee from across the north—from northern communities and councils, foresters and families. There were letters begging the Liberals to reconsider their cancelled consultations. Northerners asked the Liberal government for a fair hearing. Northern communities like Espanola, Thunder Bay and Timmins were begging the government to allow them to speak out on an issue of vital importance.

Of course, this government isn't one to listen to anyone who isn't a moneyed downtown Toronto lobbyist. Research by the PC caucus has shown that this bill isn't a product of the McGuinty government at all. The root of this legislation was written by none other than a Toronto eco-lobbyist, Tom Clark, in a paper written for the Ivey Foundation. The Ivey Foundation funded Tom Clark to produce that report. We all remember the Ivey Foundation as being that organization which bragged about playing the government like a fiddle. Their mandate is to halt all forestry in the province of Ontario. It looks like the Ivey Foundation has done it once again.

The government is continuing to fiddle while the forest industry burns. Now Tom Clark has helped them create another piece of legislation which will send shockwaves through the industry. This bill is yet another nail in the coffin of the forestry sector. While the government claims this bill will help Ontario's forestry, it was created by the very same people devoted to destruction of the forestry industry.

It was the best proof yet that Dalton McGuinty has changed. He's not the man northerners hoped he would be. He has abandoned the north. Instead of listening, northern Liberal members began a misinformation campaign in their ridings, far from their Toronto bosses. The member—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I'd ask the member to restate his position, please.

0920

Mr. Randy Hillier: Instead of listening, northern Liberal members began a campaign to deflect the legitimate concerns. The member for Algoma-Manitoulin came home and told the press that they wanted consultations at the same time that he actively cancelled them in Toronto.

These Liberal members have made clear that their loyalty is to Dalton McGuinty, not to their constituents. They made it clear when they passed the Green Energy Act, raising energy prices by 150% and forcing northerners to choose between food and heating this winter. These same high hydro prices are now causing the collapse of the forestry sector, as mills struggle to pay bills

imposed upon them by an out-of-touch Liberal government. They made it clear when they passed Bill 191 with no consultations, their Far North—and no jobs—Act. While listening to northerners, the McGuinty Liberals have closed the north to all business and designated 50% of our province as off limits for any development. That piece of trickery was masterminded by another Liberal eco-lobbyist, the president of the World Wildlife Fund.

Now, Bill 151. The Liberals have decided that it's not even worth appearing in northern Ontario. Why should they suffer the slings and arrows of the good, regular folks in communities like Sioux Lookout, Espanola or Dubreuilville? Why bother listening to people trying to save their families and their livelihoods? Why bother travelling up north when Dalton McGuinty is only trying to win seats in Toronto? The Liberals' eco-lobbyist friends never leave Toronto, so why should the Liberal members? So the government cancelled all committee hearings in the north on Bill 151. It's clear the McGuinty Liberals are so out of touch they think northerners need not be heard.

The good news: In 169 days, Ontario families will have an opportunity to send a message to this government: that enough is enough. Instead of dabbling in expensive energy experiments that are causing families', seniors' and businesses' hydro bills to skyrocket, a Tim Hudak Ontario PC government will treat energy policy as an economic policy, not a social program. We will work to ensure that forestry in Ontario is sustainable, productive and prosperous. When it comes to making decisions about northern Ontario, the PC Party will not leave northerners out in the cold. A vote for the PC Party will be a voice for northern Ontario.

Here's a letter from Marathon. The mayor of Marathon, frustrated with the province—their mill lost their wood. Their mill is closed.

Here's a story from the Chronicle Journal: "Another Sawmill Bankrupt," May 12. "Another Buchanan sawmill has entered bankruptcy," McKenzie Forest Products in Sioux Lookout. Why? Because they couldn't get any fibre.

That's Marathon and Sioux Lookout. We have letters before the standing committee from the OFIA, from Ainsworth, from Espanola, from Domtar, from Eacom, from everybody in the forestry industry—Georgia-Pacific. The list goes on and on. And what did this Liberal government do in that committee hearing? They snubbed them. Not one of those legitimate, justifiable concerns about this bill were addressed during the clause-by-clause.

They even went so far—and I'll clarify this for the minister, because obviously he didn't read the amendment. The amendment does read that there will be a review and evaluation of the first two LFMCS and that there will only be two LFMCS. The final clause of that amendment says that this amendment "does not apply with respect to ... the first two" LFMCS. So there will be no review. There will be no evaluation. Read it again,

Minister. It was the most circular, convoluted and circus amendment that's ever been put forward in front of a committee here.

Here it is from the township of Ignace: They're opposed. The mayor of Timmins, the northern Ontario chamber of commerce, the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce, the Chiefs of Ontario, NAN: Everybody is opposed to this bill, but this government is hell-bent on ramming through another bill for the Ivey Foundation and their downtown environmental friends.

I would like the minister to stand up in this House and say, "No, it wasn't because of Tom Clark and the Ivey Foundation," which funded and came up with this idea. Stand up in this House and tell us that that's not where the motivation for this bill came from, because we know that that is where the whole concept and the whole idea of creating these forestry LHINs came from: the Ivey Foundation.

I guess that really is the hallmark of a Liberal bill: not a bill that comes from broad-based consensus in a community, not a bill that comes from broad-based industry support, but from a very narrowly cast special-interest group. That's what this Liberal government has become when it applies to northern Ontario.

Every one of these—here's another one from the town of Cochrane, opposed to this bill. We even had the mayor of Dubreuilville here a couple of weeks ago, and the general manager of the mill in Dubreuilville, pleading for some fibre allocation, some certainty that that mill can operate and operate continuously. But no such confirmation came from this government.

I'll put this on the record, Minister: All those mills and all those tens of thousands of jobs are not just statistics. Behind each one of those numbers is a father, a mother, a son, a daughter, a family member who is out of work and facing the hardships of your policies. It's time for you to stand up and listen to the north. It's time for you to bring some certainty to this industry and have some prosperity in northern Ontario.

It's disappointing that the Liberals time-allocated this bill, it's disappointing that they did not listen to those justifiable amendments, and it's disappointing for northern Ontario that they will have to pick up the pieces and pay the consequences of the Ivey Foundation's relationship with the minister.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: As the critic for the New Democratic Party on this issue and on behalf of our caucus and our leader, Andrea Horwath, I want to put a few comments on the record on this very short debate at third reading.

The government is, yes, moving forward on this initiative for the change of the forest tenure model and the pricing system of timber in this province, something that we've opposed for a number of reasons that were laid out at second reading, were laid out in committee and were laid out through the media through the north and through all of Ontario.

However, we listened to the government. It's really interesting: Here's the government saying that if the member votes against this bill, we're voting against northern Ontario. What a preposterous comment for the minister to make. This bill is problematic.

You've got the Ontario Forest Industries Association, the people who represent the forestry companies in northern Ontario, saying, essentially, you're wrong. You've got major forest operators in this province who are saying that you're wrong. You have almost every mayor in northern Ontario saying that you're wrong. You've got pretty well every chamber of commerce in northern Ontario saying that you're wrong. You've got unions and workers and communities across the north that say you are wrong. And you say somehow we're opposed to the north by voting against this bill? I think you're the ones who are wrong, and I think it will be proven on October 6.

This government, quite frankly, has completely lost touch with reality. They're not listening to what people in northern Ontario have to say, because if they were, they would have been listening to Jamie Lim at the OFIA. They would have been listening to Tom Laughren and other mayors in northern Ontario. They'd be listening to Mr. Wilson from the chamber of commerce up in Thunder Bay. They'd be listening to all kinds of people who have been saying, "We're not opposed to change. We understand what change is all about. We're a resilient bunch in northern Ontario. We've understood for a long time that northern Ontario has some challenges, and we've always risen to those challenges. But this is not change that's going to move us forward. This is change that's going to put us back."

0930

You're mucking around with the licences of forestry companies, and you can ill afford to do so. If I, as a company, go out in order to finance myself for modernization in my mill or any kind of an investment I need to do for expansion, I've got to be able to show that I've got the ability to secure the money that I'm borrowing. How do you do that? Yes, it's by the assets you have and, yes, it's by your balance sheet, but it's also by being able to prove you've got trees to put in the mill. You're putting those licences at risk. Forest companies have been saying to you right from the beginning, and the OFIA has been saying to you, "If that is not the case, then put it in the legislation. Put an amendment in place that is absolutely clear that you're not going to muck with somebody's licence, and then we can go to the next step."

But you couldn't even get off the curb in this debate. You came out of the cabinet room, sat on the curb and announced to northern Ontario what great ideas you had, and then you failed to listen to anybody in northern Ontario. We said, "At least travel the bill to northern Ontario so people in the north can have an opportunity to speak." "No, no, we don't have to send this to the north. Cabinet knows better. The minister knows better. Mr. Brown certainly knows better. We just know what's got to be done in northern Ontario, because Queen's Park, after all, is the best place to make decisions about northern Ontario."

Well, let me tell you, as a northerner: Absolutely not. The people of the north had to be consulted and they weren't. Were they consulted prior to this bill being introduced? Absolutely. Were they consulted sufficiently? Not a question. The problem is, what people talked to you about at the consultation pre-drafting of the bill was very different from what they saw come out of the process once you had drafted the bill.

So on the first point, you've mucked up the issue of licences for forest companies, and that is not a good thing. It puts us in line with a whole bunch of other jurisdictions where there isn't the kind of security that companies can have in order to make the investments in their jurisdictions.

Effectively, what it does is this: For one of these companies that is either a Canadian-based or North American-based forest company which has operations across Canada and the rest of North America, and they have to decide, "Okay, we have X amount of money to invest this year, and we have to decide where we're going to invest it," it makes it very difficult for them, as a company, to say, "Well, let's put it in Ontario," because in Ontario, life has gotten very tough. We have energy rates that have gone through the roof—and I hear the Conservatives talk about energy. God, you guys started this fiasco. The nerve of the Conservatives to get up and say they understand energy, when they started the problem. Then the Liberals put it into overdrive, and on top of that, now you're mucking around with the licences. The companies, the boardrooms and the directors, are going to have to say, "All right, I've got X amount of money to invest. I can invest it in Manitoba, I can invest it in Quebec, I can invest it maybe somewhere in the United States, or in Ontario." And it's going to make it very difficult for them to invest in Ontario, once this act becomes law.

I promise you this: After the next election, if we form a government, I'm going to scrap this thing. I'm telling you right now. Absolutely. This is bad legislation.

Should we do something to deal with some of the issues that the minister raised? Absolutely. There's not a municipality, there is not a company, there's not a chamber of commerce or a mayor who says we should do nothing. However, what you've done is completely opposed to what they want. What people wanted was security of tenure, number one, and a way to utilize unutilized timber that already exists in the act that you as a minister and previous ministers of the crown under the Liberal government have refused to use. You haven't used the power that you have in the act now.

I agree with my friend Randy: All of this is kind of like creating a LHIN, in the sense that if I move everything over to the—what do they call them?—enhanced LFMCS, local forest management corporations or whatever, and I shove the responsibility over to the private sector, then, "Don't come to me when there's a problem. It's not my fault," says the government from the Liberal side. "It's them." It's the same idea as the LHINs. You're trying to put a buffer between you and the decision-

makers. You're the minister; you've got the seat. You're the government; you have the majority. You control the cabinet. The decision is yours.

I'll tell you what I would have done if I was minister over the last seven years, and I know there are some people who would disagree with me in northern Ontario, and certain people within industry. But when a company shuts down, we currently have the authority to take the wood if they're not going to reopen—the first thing I would do is say, “What can we do to keep your doors open? Is this a temporary closure or a permanent closure?” If it's a temporary closure, they've got to hold onto the wood; otherwise, the community doesn't have a chance in heck to be able to do anything after. If the company is going to say, “No, this is a permanent closure,” as was the case with Excel in Opasatika, as is the case in Smooth Rock Falls, I would say, “Okay, as the crown, the minister, I'm taking that wood back,” because we have the authority to do it now without this bill, with the current act, “and that wood will remain tied to those communities,” so that as the economy turns around, we have an opportunity to restart something in that community.

But the government isn't doing that in this bill. They're going to a forest tenure model that, at the end of the day, is not going to give the communities any more say about what happens to the trees in their backyards than the decisions of the government today. The government says, “Oh, the answer is the LFCs. We've created two LFCs, and boy, that's like sliced bread. It's so, so good; it's like ice cream with cherries on it.” Well, that's not what communities asked you for; communities asked you for a community forest model. They wanted some way of being able to have a say about the trees and how the forest is harvested and where the trees are going to be processed in their own backyard; that's what they were asking you for. When the town of Hearst, the town of Dubreuilville and other communities went to your pre-hearings prior to the introduction of the bill, the communities were saying, “We really do want a community forest approach.”

I recognize there are some challenges with that; I've put that on the record. I understand there are some problems with that, and yes, it's a bit of a balancing act. But at the end of the day, I think the essence is, you can't muck with the existing licence. The licence is there, and you can't take it away unless the company closes down or doesn't meet the terms and conditions of their licence. I can tell you that in the about 20 years that the current sustainable forestry development act has been in place, there hasn't been a case, quite frankly, where a company has not lived up to their commitment on the licence. Why? Because they're responsible business owners. It's not to their advantage to muck these things up. They understand that they've got to operate within the rules of Ontario. They've got to demonstrate to the public that what we do is sustainable—that, yes, it's green.

The forest industry is a green industry, something that a lot of people don't recognize. It frustrates me to no end, as a northerner, when I hear people talk about forestry as

if it's some sort of brownfield industry. God, we're the greenest industry going. We cut a forest that is about to die or burn down and then we replant it. We're farmers, except we have a crop that takes 80 to 90 years to grow. We do a good job at it, and we do so by making sure that we watch out for the habitat. We make sure, through our forest management plans, that we deal with issues having to do with the water, having to do with fauna and animals, making sure that our cutting approaches are able to respect those things.

But back to the bill: The government then says, “We're going to do these local forest management companies, these LFCs.” Well, you've missed the point on that one, too, so I'm telling you now, this is bad legislation. Thank God we're four months before an election and the government is not going to have the chance to even enact this legislation—well, they may enact it, but they won't have a chance to put it into play for a while yet, because the regulations certainly won't be done by October 6. So we have a bit of breathing room, thank God, because this is really bad legislation.

On the issue of the LFCs, one thing that I want to put on the record: You are now going to go to a competitive bid system on that wood. What the government doesn't want to accept is that, yes, the Americans are extremely protectionist when it comes to their market and when it comes to Canadian softwood imports into their country—exports from ours—they are going to use absolutely everything, as they have before, to make the argument that we're somehow subsidizing our industry.

We're not subsidizing our industry. Time and time again we've gone before the various tribunals and we've made the point, and the American government has lost their case each and every time. But now, all of a sudden, if you go to a competitive wood bid system, you open two problems.

One is, let's say they get money under the roads program—because we build these roads not just to do harvesting, but also to access the forest; there's a dual use for our roads. Do the Americans now argue, “Well, how can you have a competitive system and, at the same time, subsidize your roads?” It's just going to invite more countervail. I don't know why you're doing that.

On the other point, it's going to be the highest bidder who will get the wood. That's the way the model works. When you have a competitive system, it's never the lowest person who gets the product; it's always the highest bid that gets the product.

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What do you do if, for example, you're an LFC, where all of a sudden you've got wood in your jurisdiction. You have some use that you would like to use it for locally so you can create jobs in your neighbouring community or your own community. Then all of a sudden, somebody from afar comes in and says, “I'm prepared to pay a premium on that wood.” They can be so much from afar that they can be from Manitoba, Quebec, the United States. There would be nothing to stop us from allowing them to buy that wood on a

competitive bid system, and I'm going to predict that's exactly what's going to happen. We're going to have situations where the LFMCs are going to have wood that's up for sale and somebody's going to bid for it away from the community that the wood came from. You're going to see some local jobs when it comes to the harvesting and the transportation of the wood, and then people in the community are going to sit by the side of the highway and they're going to be waving as the wood drives by their house to some community farther away in Ontario or a community outside of this province altogether. I just say that this is really, really bad news on the part of what the government is doing to northern Ontario.

To the issue of allocation of wood: The government has argued, "Oh, we need this because people are hoarding wood." If people are hoarding wood, it's your fault. You have the authority under the act now to allocate timber that is underutilized or not being utilized. The government says, "No, we don't have the right." What the heck was your allocation process that you just went through? You put up, through RFP, all kinds of wood through a competitive wood bidding system that you set up about two years ago for people to bid on. You did that because you had the authority under the act. And the government says, "Oh, we need to stop the hoarding of wood." Give me a break. You have the ability to do whatever you want with underutilized or non-utilized timber, period. You have the right to put up an RFP process. You have the right to do whatever you want by way of crown wood because it is the crown, it is the province that controls that underutilized, unutilized wood. So instead, the government says, "We're doing this because we want to stop the hoarding." I would argue that you have the authority already under the act to deal with the hoarding issue.

Let me get to the Rentech issue that was raised by the minister. Yes, that's good news. Listen: You're not going to hear me, as a New Democrat, say that the idea of finding a use for timber in northern Ontario is a bad thing, but a couple of questions have to be asked about this particular project. First of all, what you've done is, you've allocated timber from other communities like Dubreuilville—

Mr. Michael A. Brown: No.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Well, he says no. You're going to get a chance to correct my record if you want. The point is, there's a limited amount of wood that's available. The community of Dubreuilville and the community of Marathon are up in arms because at the end they're saying, "Listen: The wood that's going over to White River"—and thank God for them; they're going to get something—"is at the expense of our communities"—number one. If that is true or not true, clarify, but that is the sense that people are getting in Dubreuilville and Marathon.

The other issue is that we need to ensure it's a best-end-use policy when it comes to the wood that goes into that mill. The only way you can do that is to find a way to make sure that the mills in Dubreuilville and Marathon

and other communities can open up, take the timber, pass it through their mills, and the wood that goes to White River is basically chips from the mills or it's tops and scraps from the trees as they're cut in the forest. If you do that, then that makes some sense, because we do know there's a lesser market for chips today and that is a problem for our sawmills. That's one of the reasons why the sawmills are shut down.

In the province of Quebec, they have a policy that says you can't grind round logs. You can't grind trees to make chips for mills in Quebec; they have to be residual waste from sawmills. What that does is, it allows the sawmills to make money on the sale of their chips, which allows them to keep their doors open, more so than they have in Ontario, and then supply the chips into the paper mills and into the pulp mills of Quebec.

If the government was to have an approach that says, "We're going to work at making sure that the wood that goes into the Marathon project is going to be residual wood waste from the forest floor as we harvest the trees and the chips from the mills by which the logs are going to," then there's some sense to this; then that's a really good thing. At the end of the day, it means to say that the sawmill in Dubreuilville or Marathon or wherever it might be goes into operation, because they're going to need a lot of wood. The project in White River is over a million cubic metres of wood a year. That's a fair amount of wood. Let's ensure and guarantee that that mill is going to be operating with wood waste and not grinding logs, because that is what's starting to happen in this province. In Terrace Bay, for example, they're chipping round logs because there's no place to send the trees through the sawmill because of the set-up we have in Ontario, and they need the chips to operate, so they're grinding. Grinding 80- or 90-year-old spruce or whatever else you might be using is not good policy, so we need to ensure that the White River mill, when it moves forward, is one that operates on wood waste and doesn't necessarily operate on grinding timber in the forest.

The second thing is: Is the financing really put together for this project? I had a chance to speak with Angelo last week when I was in White River at another event having to do with Agent Orange at the health fair that they had there. He seemed to think, "Yes, probably." But there really isn't any guarantee at this point that the financing is even in place for this particular project, and it's probably a fair amount of time away before that project ever gets off the ground.

I say to the government: This is not a bad thing that's happening to White River. You're not going to hear New Democrats say it's a bad thing. But what I'm saying is, we need to make sure that this is a win-win situation not only for White River, but that it's also a win for the province; that it's a win for the communities in the neighbouring areas around White River, that their sawmills are going to be able to get up and running again; and that it's a win for the local economy and the people working there. I think we have an opportunity to do that, and there are some questions that have yet to be answered: Does

the deal, at the end of the day, follow those principles that I set out?

I say to the government in this debate: To try to say all of a sudden that voting against this bill is voting against the north is completely off track. It makes no sense.

I'll just use the last minute or two that I have to say to what degree the Liberals are out of touch. Mr. Bartolucci, the minister of whatever, was up in Timmins at FONOM last week, I believe on Friday. He spent 40 minutes in his speech talking about how it's not true that the government is not consulting northerners. For 40 minutes, he stood in front of the mayors and various aldermen from across northern Ontario and various people who were there and said, "We're consulting. We're doing a good job. You know, the Liberals are doing so great. It's the NDP and the Conservatives who are lying to you." That a minister of the crown has to go to Timmins and spend 40 minutes to try to convince northerners that this government is consulting tells me that they're not consulting, and I think it's pretty indicative of where this government is at. I think this is sad.

For a government to introduce such legislation at this point in their mandate tells me that, politically, they ain't very wise and that, number two, they really do not understand after almost eight years in power what they could have done to make life in northern Ontario better. It will be the people of northern Ontario who will judge the results. We've had a precursor, looking at the federal election, where the Liberals ended up in third place in pretty well every riding except a couple in northern Ontario. It pretty well tells you what's going to happen in the next provincial election with this government.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate? The member from—

Mr. Steve Clark: Leeds–Grenville.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Leeds–Grenville.

Mr. Steve Clark: I'm pleased to join in the third reading debate on Bill 151.

I was walking over to Queen's Park this morning, and I was thinking about what I've learned in the general government committee hearings as we debated Bill 151. It almost makes me think of that old game—when I was a kid, I called it the shell game—where you had the three walnut shells with the marble. You would move them around and have people guess where the marble was. When you open up the shell, it was almost like when the minister made his announcement on January 13, when he opened it up and said, "This is what Bill 151 is going to be like." Then the marble went down and the shells turned around, and then the bill received first reading on February 23, and the bill wasn't the same as the minister's announcement in January. There was significant difference.

We got lots of correspondence, lots of resolutions from municipalities, lots of letters from the forestry industry, saying, "How come the bill that's presented isn't the same as the minister's announcement or some of the information that was given as part of the consultation

that the minister and the parliamentary assistant talked about?"

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So then, we have a general government meeting where the subcommittee decides that there's going to be northern hearings. They decide that the committee's going to go to Pembroke, Timmins, Thunder Bay and Sault Ste. Marie during our break week in April. Then the shells go around again, and the next day it opens up, and we have a meeting on April 30 when, lo and behold, the government says, "No, we've already had enough consultation. The minister has come forward and talked about what is going to be in the bill, so we don't need to go to the north."

But then the shells get changed around again, and our friend the member for Algoma–Manitoulin gets quoted in the Mid-North Monitor saying, "I don't want to see consultations in the cities, that is what I said, because that is not where the people directly affected by this legislation live," explained Brown. "I want to see the hearings go to the communities directly affected by this legislation, places like Espanola."

So, on one hand, as part of the shell game, we make an announcement as a government. The minister says, "This what we're going to do." We make a decision at committee that we're going to go to the north; we're going to consult. We're not sitting anyway. It's a break week. All of a sudden, the rug gets pulled out from under northern communities, and then the quote. It's that whole sleight of hand that this government seems to play with northern Ontario.

But do you know what? Every time you play the shell game, eventually, even though you're pretty quick with your changes, even though you're great with your misdirection as a government, every so often, somebody's going to guess where the marble is underneath the walnut shell.

I was at the Canadian Club a couple of weeks ago and heard the Premier talk about a lot of things. Most things I didn't agree with, but one thing that he did say was true. He talked about democracy and the fact that in an election the people are always right.

You can move the shells around all you want. You can make an announcement in January and table a bill in February that's not the same. You can say to the north that you're going to go and do hearings one day and retract it the next. But on October 6, that's when the north is going to judge you. It's going to judge you on whether they believe that you were good to them with this bill, that you listened to them.

It's the same thing with the Far North Act. We did the same dance at the general government committee with the Far North Act, where we said we were going to go to the north, and then you pulled out the rug on the north for those hearings as well.

Interjection.

Mr. Steve Clark: No, we didn't. We were supposed to go in June, Mike; come on. That may be what you said to the Mid-North Monitor back then, but—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I remind the member to direct your comments through the Chair.

Mr. Steve Clark: Thank you, Chair; I will.

I want to also commend the member for Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington because, when we did clause-by-clause on May 4, he put forward a motion on behalf of our party that all LFMCS are to be examined on the criteria of financial viability after that five-year plan and that the report comes back here to the Legislative Assembly, comes back here for the 107 MPPs to deal with and to review. That motion wasn't passed.

From our perspective in our party, that's again an opportunity that we had as MPPs to review that, and this government said no. It abdicated our responsibilities as members of the Legislative Assembly. As my eastern friend and neighbour said, we need those reviews. We need to review those two cases. We need to give the north the opportunity to review that report, bring it right here and table it right there at the table—not to do it in secret, not to deal with the minister and the bureaucrats. Let's not play the shell game with northern Ontario again.

Make no mistake: As the member for Timmins–James Bay said earlier—and he was the third member of the opposition side who was at the hearings—there are a lot of problems. The Ontario Forest Industries Association brought up some issues just prior to our third reading. I've read a lot of their briefs, and they've sent us a lot of letters on behalf of the industry. You know what? I think Jamie Lim and Scott Jackson would make a better minister and parliamentary assistant than you two, because they have brought forward a number of issues that you've ignored.

The Canadian Bar Association, at third reading on April 13—the member for Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington mentioned it earlier—made some excellent points that you just ignored.

This bill needs work. We missed an opportunity to take the time, in the few days we had left, to make Bill 151 work. And you threw it all away.

So on October 6, the people of the north—

Mr. Michael A. Brown: They'll decide.

Mr. Steve Clark: They will decide, Mike. They will.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Michael A. Brown: I am delighted to take part in this third reading of Bill 151, a bill that has been canvassed across the province and across northern Ontario for more than two years. It has had, just so people understand, 118 hearings and consultations across this province. Of that 118, 114 took place in northern Ontario. I think that speaks loudly to the concerns, and to the government listening to those concerns, across the north.

We need to put the wood back to work, and this is what this bill is about. There are nine million cubic metres of wood out there that were not being used—some would say “hoarded,” but at least they were unused.

I have communities across my constituency that have suffered greatly because they lacked access to wood. I have proponents come into my office almost on a weekly basis who suggest to me that they want opportunities for that wood and can't get it under the present system. There is—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: How did you give it to White River if you can't do it?

Mr. Michael A. Brown: I can tell you. The member from Timmins–James Bay raised an issue that's close to my heart and close to the minister's heart, and that is the Rentech project in White River—1.3 million cubic metres per year to a company that is going to use unmerchantable timber. He knows what that means. It means that it's not sawlogs. That's what it means. That's exactly what it means.

For him to cast aspersions on a prominent company that is going to work in White River—ask the mayor of White River. Ask the council of White River. Ask the councils and the people across that region, because in truth, it is a regional economic driver. Ask them about it. Ask Hornepayne about the fact that on Saturday I announced 220,000 cubic metres of additional wood for them. That is what this means. This means a market for timber.

I cannot understand why anybody, particularly my friends in the Conservative Party, would believe that some kind of free market would be a bad thing. I don't understand how anybody who believes in competition and free markets could believe that this rather modest effort at providing the crown forests with some degree of response to markets, both up and down, would be a bad thing.

I'm not going to speak too much longer. But I want to know why, at committee, if the New Democrats thought this bill was so bad, they introduced but one amendment, and it was to the purpose clause at the beginning and it was already covered. And I'd like to know why the good friends in the official opposition decided that 200 of their amendments didn't even need to go forward. I couldn't believe they withdrew all those. Look: They're all bluster, all smoke and mirrors—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I'd ask the member to withdraw.

Mr. Randy Hillier: I withdraw.

Mr. Michael A. Brown: They're all bluster; they're all smoke and mirrors.

The people of the north will judge us, and we look forward to it.

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The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Order.

Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 3, 2011, I am now required to put the question. Mr. Gravelle has moved third reading of Bill 151, An Act to enact the Ontario Forest Tenure Modernization Act, 2011 and to

amend the Crown Forest Sustainability Act, 1994. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

A recorded vote being required, it will be deferred until after question period today.

Third reading vote deferred.

TIME ALLOCATION

Hon. Gerry Phillips: I move that, pursuant to standing order 47 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House, when the order of the day is called for resuming the adjourned debate on government order number 56, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the motion and any amendments thereto, which questions shall be decided without further debate or amendment; and

That the vote on government order number 56 may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on government order number 56, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Norm Miller: It's my pleasure to join in the debate this morning on the time allocation motion the government has called. I was actually, to be honest, expecting someone from the government to speak to their own time allocation motion, but it doesn't seem like they're interested in speaking to their time allocation motion.

This time allocation motion is kind of interesting in that it's to do with putting an end to the debate on their very political motion that they brought forward yesterday that was a very political motion where it talks about all the wonderful things they've done, which I won't repeat. Then it goes on to say that they reject the introduction of a carbon tax as a measure that would hurt Ontario's economic growth and they reject an increase to the HST rate or a decrease to the rate that would benefit the wealthiest and take \$3 billion out of the economy. That's what this motion is all about: The McGuinty Liberal government stating once again that they're not going to bring about a tax increase. That's what it's all about, and it seems extraordinary that we are debating this motion, and now we're having a time allocation on this motion, just so that the McGuinty government can state, in a different way, the same message they've stated very clearly on a couple of occasions in the past.

I do believe that the Premier even states that the best predictor of future behaviour is your past behaviour. It was he that, on September 11, 2003, stated very clearly to the cameras that he wouldn't increase taxes in that 2003 election. For myself at that point, I actually believed him. I just didn't expect someone that went before the cameras and actually signed this taxpayer protection pledge—I just didn't believe that he'd actually break that promise.

But he did; he broke that promise, and very quickly after the 2003 election, so it wasn't worth the paper it was written on.

Just to refresh your memory, Madam Speaker, what he agreed to in 2003 was that he wouldn't raise taxes. He stated, "I, Dalton McGuinty, leader of the Liberal Party of Ontario, promise, if my party is elected as the next government, that I will not raise taxes or implement any new taxes without the ... consent of Ontario voters...." He ran 200 ads in that election campaign restating, and restating many times, this promise.

I think it was quite persuasive. I know there would be a lot of voters out there who would be worried—the Liberal brand is that they like to tax people and they like to spend money. There would be people who wouldn't vote for them because they would be worried about that and what it would mean to the finances of the province of Ontario if they were successful in winning government. This pledge, I think, was very effective. Unfortunately, it wasn't worth the paper it was written on.

As we know, immediately after the 2003 election, Premier McGuinty brought in the health tax, which is a huge tax increase. Over \$3 billion a year is being raised by that, and it's not going to health; it just goes into the general revenues. That was just a way of camouflaging a tax increase, and they're very good at being creative that way—an extra \$3-billion tax, so that you pay up to \$900 a person for this new tax that the Premier and the McGuinty government brought in after the 2003 election, after making a very clear pledge that they wouldn't raise taxes. That's 2003—one time.

Then, in 2007, we have another election happening. In that one, he made a different statement. I think he was accused that he would raise taxes, and when he was accused by his critics that he was going to raise taxes, he said, "They're wrong. They're wrong. They're wrong." I don't remember the word "HST" being mentioned in the 2007 election. Perhaps the member from Simcoe-Grey could let me know if I'm wrong in that, but I certainly don't remember it being discussed at all. Then, after the 2007 election, surprise, surprise, in the first budget almost immediately after the election, the government brings in the HST—which was a tax increase, because the way that this provincial McGuinty government implemented it—and they have choice there; whether you like the tax or don't like it, there's choice about how the government implements it. It applied to all kinds of things that the former provincial sales tax did not apply to.

So all of a sudden, you have a whole bunch of things that there was not provincial sales tax on that now there is HST on. Those are things like gasoline for your cars, electricity for your homes, heating oil—some pretty basic staples that the old tax didn't apply to and the new tax does apply to, and other specific ways they implemented the McGuinty HST. One of the benefits for businesses is that there are input tax credits, where they can claim some of the tax back. Well, they conveniently deny input tax credits on any companies over a certain size. It adds up to about \$1.3 billion a year for eight years that they

are denying input tax credits, the one benefit business might get. The way they're implementing it—you know, we've got a problem with people saving enough money for retirement. The McGuinty government is making it worse, because they're putting the HST onto the management fees on registered retirement savings plans, meaning that if you don't save enough money, it makes it more difficult for families to save for retirement.

Once again, this was another tax after saying that they wouldn't bring in a tax. They brought in so many different new taxes. They brought in the diamond tax. We're finally having our first diamond mine in the province of Ontario, with De Beers, a well-known company, investing hundreds of millions of dollars in Attawapiskat. They're a few years into the project, working with the communities around them to benefit them, and all of a sudden, the McGuinty government changes the rules of the game midstream—anything they can do to get some extra money coming their way. They doubled the diamond tax after the company was committed, so they couldn't at that point decide, "Oh, sorry; the rules have changed. This doesn't make sense for us anymore." They were committed. So it was a sneaky way of going about a tax increase.

1010

We just learned yesterday about the rules changing with the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp. Municipalities that host the slots, and I think it also applies to racetracks, where they thought they were going to get 5% of the gross revenues—what's the McGuinty government doing in that case? They're changing the accounting rules. What it's going to mean is less money for these municipalities.

That provoked a reaction from Point Edward Mayor Dick Kirkland yesterday in the *Observer*, in an article entitled "Casino Revenue to Shrink in Sarnia, Point Edward." It said: "It's just another tax grab by the government," said Kirkland. "The government is looking for every penny they can find to pay for their debt. I'm very disappointed if this is what their new accounting practice means. For us, the loss of \$46,000 means a capital project won't get done."

The communities, when they agreed to host these slot facilities, were counting on 5% of gross revenue, and they use that money for projects in the communities. I know in Sault Ste. Marie they use it to fund the hospital; they use it for physician retention. I'm sure Dick Kirkland, the mayor of Point Edward, had many good projects that he was counting on that money for. But once again, the McGuinty government has changed the rules of the game in midstream, and that's going to hurt those Ontario communities.

What I'm establishing is a pattern here: That is, where the McGuinty government says one thing before the election and they say something very, very different after the election. They're doing it again with this motion, which they've gone to the extraordinary effort to time-allocate to end debate on it, because they recognize that the opposition will keep debating this. The reason we

want to keep debating it is, we want to point out and remind people, who maybe have short memories, what's happened in the past.

In 2003, there was a pledge to not raise taxes. It can't get any clearer when you go on TV and you sign a document before the cameras, and then you break that pledge. Just last week, a PC candidate was here at the Legislature with that pledge to remind people that Mr. McGuinty made it. Then, of course, in 2007, once again saying they won't raise taxes, and they did.

Here we have another election around the corner, and guess what? The McGuinty Liberals are making another pledge. The question is: Should the Ontario general public, should the taxpayers, believe this pledge?

Mr. Steve Clark: They say they really, really, really mean it this time.

Mr. Norm Miller: Yes, they're saying that they really, really, really, really mean the pledge this time. They're very clear this time that they mean the pledge that says that they won't—it's almost like when they say they won't do something, you should reverse it and say, "That means they really are going to do it." So they say they won't introduce a carbon tax and they won't increase or decrease the HST. I'm not sure why they don't like a decrease. I guess it's because they're so against reducing the tax burden on Ontario families.

But I can tell you, I'm hearing from Ontario families and seniors that they're feeling the pressure of daily life, of pocketbook expenses. There isn't a day that goes by that I don't hear from someone in Parry Sound–Muskoka by email, a phone call or some form of communication that they're concerned about their increasing hydro bill. Their hydro bills have gone up so dramatically, it's come down to choices about having to greatly restrict the use of their power or, in some cases, they have to actually—I met one constituent who actually was wearing a snowmobile suit when they met me because they were afraid to have the heat on after they got an equalization bill. They had a \$7,000 hydro bill because Hydro hadn't been in to do the reconciliation for a year and a half. This constituent was in visiting with me in a snowmobile suit, turning the breakers off in her house because she was afraid of what the next hydro bill would be. That is commonplace around the province.

I can see that you're getting ready to cut me off, so I will sit down.

Debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. It being 10:15, this House stands recessed until 10:30.

The House recessed from 1015 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome Jim Watson, the member from Ottawa West–Nepean in the 38th and 39th Parliaments, back to Queen's Park today. Your Worship, welcome back to the Legislature.

Hon. John Wilkinson: I hope all members will join me in welcoming two ministers of the environment who are here today. They are ministers of the environment today for the province of Ontario. We have Georgia Berta, who is from Parkdale—High Park—she goes to St. Pius; and we also have Brandon Cormier, who's from Holy Spirit Catholic School in Scarborough—Agincourt.

We are joined by a very proud mom, Ingrid Ally, who is the mom of Brandon; and a very proud dad, Joe Berta, who's here with Georgia. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. John O'Toole: Today is Community Living Day here at Queen's Park, and I'd like to welcome, from Community Living Durham North: Karen McKeown, as well as Samantha Hillis, Laura Mercer, John Lee, Colleen Arbuckle, Tony Clayton, Nicky Jones, Tina Good and Felishia Charles. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Monte Kwinter: I'd like to introduce the mother of our page Amira Abdalla, Irina Demitcheva, and her sister Larissa Smeretsky. Welcome.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I'm pleased to welcome Jim Triantafilou from Brampton Caledon Community Living.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: I'd like to welcome Debbie Rollier, president, and Keith Powell, executive director, from Community Living Ontario to the Legislature today for their annual day.

I'd also like to extend a warm welcome to representatives from all the local Community Living agencies here today. A special welcome to Chris Stringer, Bruce Rivers, Mary Pat Armstrong, her daughter Jenny Armstrong, Patsy Anderson and Susan Seller from Community Living Toronto.

Thank you all for joining us today and for all your work on behalf of those with developmental disabilities.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Though they're not here yet, because it's Community Living Day here at Queen's Park today, we were expecting a large contingent from Community Living Tillsonburg, who are going to be here to join me for lunch today. I want to welcome them to Queen's Park.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd like to take this opportunity to extend an invitation to any interested members and staff in the building this afternoon. His Honour the Lieutenant Governor will be rededicating the plaque commemorating the 1939 visit of the King and Queen to Canada and to this Legislature. The event will be taking place at 1:30 on the west lawn. All members and staff are welcome.

ORAL QUESTIONS

ENERGY POLICIES

Mrs. Christine Elliott: My question is to the Premier. Premier McGuinty is squeezing Ontario families and seniors with his increases to taxes and skyrocketing hydro bills. The Ontario PC leader is offering Ontario

families relief by ending the sweetheart deal with Samsung that is driving up hydro bills.

The Premier showed what his idea of relief for families is when he sent the Minister of Finance out last week to say—and I am not making this up—that Premier McGuinty lowered gas prices by slapping an 8% HST tax grab onto what families pay at the pumps. Is that the same reason he slapped the HST on hydro bills too?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I'm glad that my honourable colleague has raised the matter of our hydro policies, our clean energy plan and our Green Energy Act in particular, because I want the opportunity to speak to that.

Yesterday, I had the opportunity to visit CS Wind in Windsor. It's an exciting new business. They have taken over a vacant auto parts plant; they must have over 200,000 square feet there. They're hiring 300 people, because they have orders for 300 wind towers every single year.

In the afternoon, I went to visit Canadian Solar in Guelph. They took over a plant that was empty for three years. There are 300 people working there now, making solar panels. They're going to grow to 500.

This morning, I was at Samco Solar. They have some 60 employees there. They're sourcing parts from 23 separate Ontario businesses. All those, in turn, represent parts.

What they want to know is: Who is going to stand up for their jobs?

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mrs. Christine Elliott: Premier McGuinty has gotten so tired and so out of touch that he thinks adding 8% HST to hydro and gas is relief for families. It's as laughable as when he said that smart meter tax machines and time of use would save Ontario families money or that his Green Energy Act only adds 1% to hydro bills—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock, please.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Member from Willowdale.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Minister of Finance. Member from Leeds.

Please continue.

Mrs. Christine Elliott: The Premier actually thinks that Ontario families will believe him when he says they will pay the same amount for hydro this year as they did last year. All of these hydro increases have two things in common: He lowballs how much Ontario families will pay for them, and then he slaps the greedy HST tax grab on top of that.

Ontario families simply can't trust the Premier. If he pledges to give relief this fall, why shouldn't Ontario families run for the hills?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I want to remind my honourable colleague, of course, that without the participation and full support of federal Finance Minister Flaherty,

we could not have put the HST here in Ontario. I want to remind her of that.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: He understands.

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: He understands the importance of strengthening our economy to succeed in a highly competitive globalized economy.

I want to come back to the point I was making a moment ago. I've had the opportunity now to meet and look directly into the eyes of people who have obtained employment in our burgeoning, exciting clean energy sector. What I'm encouraging my honourable colleagues opposite to do, notwithstanding their commitment to recklessly destroy this industry which is, really, in its infancy and represents so much opportunity to our children and our grandchildren, is to go visit those same plants. I want them to go look at those same workers. I want them to look them in the eyes. I want them to tell them they don't believe in their jobs, they don't believe in their future, they don't believe in our capacity as a province to come together and find opportunity in the post-manufacturing—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Final supplementary?

Mrs. Christine Elliott: Here is the reality of what's happening: Just as with gas, the McGuinty Liberals collect more HST on hydro every time the rates go up. Your take of the HST on hydro bills grew and will keep growing with each hydro rate increase; all the expensive energy experiments, like Samsung, that get added to their bills; and the debt retirement charge that you've turned into a permanent tax grab. Premier McGuinty has taken away the incentive to keep bills low.

How much did his eyes light up when he realized that it doesn't matter how much he raises the price of hydro; he will take in more HST revenue each and every time he increases the hydro bill?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Again, I want to commend the federal government and, in particular, the leadership of Minister Flaherty, with whom we worked so well in order to ensure that we laid a foundation for growth and prosperity to create 600,000 more jobs. Without the support of Minister Flaherty in particular, we could not have gone ahead with the HST.

Again, I want to say to my honourable colleagues that I'm urging them, on behalf of the workers with whom I've been meeting in recent days, to give serious reconsideration to their plan to kill their jobs, to kill our Green Energy Act and, particularly, to rescind the Samsung contract, which represents on its own 16,000 new jobs. On behalf of those workers, I am asking my honourable colleagues to ask themselves once again why they won't stand up and fight for jobs that are there for us to be had in the exciting new clean energy sector.

TAXATION

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Back to the Premier. Last week, the Minister of Revenue appeared at the estimates committee. On behalf of the Ontario PC caucus, I asked

her how much revenue has been collected from the HST on hydro bills. In fact, we had to ask her 25 times, and she still refused to say how much revenue her ministry took in from the HST on hydro bills. It's an important question given that, earlier today, the Premier was asked himself if he would promise not to raise taxes, and he said, "We'll keep doing what we're doing" to Ontario families. How much more money have you taken from Ontario families and seniors for the HST that they pay on hydro bills?

1040

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: I'll remind the member that the harmonized sales tax is now collected by the federal government. The total amount that's collected in Ontario goes into the national pool. It is then allocated—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I can see that the honourable member who just asked the question had to put in her earpiece to hear the answer, and it's as a result of the interjections coming from her own side. I would ask that you would be respectful to your own member.

Minister?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: It is then allocated to the provinces based on an econometric formula that's developed in consultation with the provinces. The monies are then remitted on a weekly basis.

One of the interesting aspects now that we've harmonized not only the tax but the collection of the tax is that we're saving Ontarians half a billion dollars a year in collection costs, and that builds on our decision a number of years ago to harmonize the collection of corporate taxes, which saves everybody a lot of money.

It's the right policy. It's a good policy. She may want to ask the federal government if they can break out that number for her.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Only the finance minister of Ontario would have the audacity to come to this House and say that adding 8% to 17% more of the items in Ontario is a tax decrease.

He has had a week to release details of what they say it will cost to end their sweetheart Samsung deal. Your energy minister had an entire weekend, with advisors, to come up with the numbers, but nothing. With the revenue minister, it's even worse. The first time we asked her how much HST Ontario families paid on hydro bills was two weeks ago. We asked her 25 times. Ontario families are feeling the squeeze. They're struggling to pay the hydro bills. You've had two weeks to come up with an answer to their question and our question.

Why don't you want Ontario families to know how much money for the HST you are taking out of their pockets and putting into yours?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: I am very glad that we are cutting personal taxes by \$11 billion for all Ontarians. I'm very delighted.

I just want to share some quotes with my colleague opposite. Now, this is a direct quote from March 27,

2009. It says, "I'm quite encouraged by the fact that the government of Ontario decided to harmonize the PST with the GST.... This is jobs, this is investment, this is good economic policy." Who said that? The Honourable Jim Flaherty, Minister of Finance for Canada.

The member for the opposition may not want to say what they're going to do, other than she accused Ottawa businesses of fearmongering because they dared to speak up against a Tory policy. That kind of intimidation doesn't work here—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Final supplementary?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I have some quotes of my own. I'm happy.

Jim Garchinski of the public sector retiree union says, "We're all vehemently opposed to this HST by a government that is about to unilaterally force another massive tax grab on citizens"—he called it legalized theft.

Internal modeling done back when gas was a buck a litre shows that Premier McGuinty knew that an 8% HST on energy would bring in almost \$1.6 billion in revenue. Ontario families simply want to know how much of that HST you have collected off their hydro bills.

We asked the minister who collects the tax 25 separate times. You, instead, got her to read a letter to the editor that was published in community newspapers on the record, but still she refused to reveal how much more Ontario families are forced to pay.

We want you to respect Ontario families. Why won't you respect Ontario families who are paying the bills?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: The HST is 8% on gas and hydro, and we gave, on hydro, a 10% rebate which that member and her party voted against.

Let me share a couple of other quotes with the member opposite. Here's another quote: "We understand that the"—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Minister.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Member from Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound. Member from Halton.

Minister?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: Here's another quote: "We understand that the whole tax policy is switching to consumption-based taxing as opposed to income-based taxing.... We see the input tax credit, as has been described by Jack Mintz and others, as probably the right sort of policy...." Who said that? John O'Toole, PC MPP for Durham, in a standing committee.

You know what? They're here one day, there the next day. Their federal brethren support it. Your own colleague supports it. You don't get it. You know what? You accused Ottawa businesses of fearmongering. You can't intimidate them and you can't intimidate us. We'll stand up for Ontario families, and you'll be given a very clear message—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Premier. Does the Ontario Liberal Party accept donations from publicly funded institutions like colleges?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: There are rules in place which govern political contributions and I'm sure my honourable colleague is very much aware of those. It's incumbent upon all of us to respect those, and I want to assure her that we are in fact doing that.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: In May 2008, the Premier hosted a \$5,000-a-plate dinner in Barrie. One guest was Brian Tamblyn, the president of Georgian College, a publicly funded institution. What did the Premier speak with Mr. Tamblyn about at that dinner?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: If my honourable colleague honestly thinks that I can recall what I spoke to a particular individual about three years ago, then she has a higher appreciation of my own memory than I do myself.

What I can say is that there are rules in place governing political contributions. It's incumbent upon all of us to respect those rules, and we will continue to do so on our side of the House.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Final supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Records obtained through the freedom-of-information process show that Brian Tamblyn, the president of publicly funded Georgian College, expensed that \$5,000 Liberal Party donation to his college. The public and students paid for it. Why does the Premier think that Mr. Tamblyn considered attendance at an Ontario Liberal Party fundraiser as a legitimate cost of his job?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I appreciate the issue raised by my colleague, but my information is different, in that it was paid out of his own pocket and not expensed to the college.

But I think there is a point to be made here. Maybe we can use this as an opportunity to remind all of those who have the privilege of working in our broader public sector that should they wish to attend a political fundraiser, they are obviously entitled to do so. There's nothing saying that they can't do that, but if they want to do so, they should be paying that out of their own pockets.

POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Premier. I've got a fairly good idea why the president thought expensing a political donation was reasonable. Mr. Tamblyn likely thought it was the only way to get a hearing on behalf of his students and his community. Does the Premier really think that politics should work that way in this province?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Obviously, I can't agree with—I don't think one iota of information, such as it is, is to be found within that question. I think that if you were to objectively assess our government's record when

it comes to post-secondary education, the fact that we have created 260,000 more spaces in our colleges and universities and apprenticeship programs, the fact that we have in fact tripled the number of grants—one in four Ontario students are now accessing grants. We brought grants back. They had been eliminated under the previous NDP government. We capped loans, OSAP loans, at \$7,300 per year. I think the record reveals pretty specifically and explicitly that we have done much to support our post-secondary education system, and we look forward to doing much more.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: You would be interested to know that shortly after we submitted our freedom-of-information request, Mr. Tamblyn repaid the donation personally.

But can the Premier tell us how many other publicly funded institutions or organizations have been—

Interjections.

1050

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock.

Minister of Energy. Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Minister of Community Safety. Minister of Agriculture. Member from Ancaster. Minister of the Environment. Minister of Energy.

Please continue.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is: Can the Premier tell us how many other publicly funded organizations have been expensing donations to the Liberal Party?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I remind the honourable members that this is a historically designated building. These desks are antique and are very important, and we want to ensure that they are usable for future members. I would just ask that they refrain from heavy pounding.

Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I want to state to my honourable colleague that a moment ago I was left with the distinct impression that Mr. Tamblyn had not paid for this particular ticket on his own. I think we all were left with that mistaken impression. I would invite my honourable colleague to correct the record and, should she wish to do so, to in fact apologize. I think that would lend honour; honour to herself and honour to our Legislature.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Minister of Agriculture. The member from Sault Ste. Marie. Minister of Community Safety. Member from Ancaster. Minister of Health.

Final supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I don't remember seeing anywhere in the records that the Liberals actually gave back this donation from the college. Mr. Tamblyn eventually did, once the FOI was filed.

The point here, though, is that the Premier should be listening to the best ideas in this province, not the best donors to his political party. Can the Premier tell us what was discussed at this \$5,000-a-plate dinner, and why a

college president felt that it was the best way to get the ear of the Premier to hear his ideas?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: This was a gotcha question and my honourable colleague got herself. I'll leave it at that. I'll let the honourable member do what she thinks is appropriate in the circumstances.

What I can say is that we have in fact banned lobbyists in our publicly funded institutions, particularly because we believe that presidents, CEOs, executives and representatives of those institutions have full access to our ministers, who have responsibility for those institutions. We think that's the kind of government that we ought to be and, in fact, that we are: one that is accessible and open to our public partners to ensure that we have an ongoing dialogue, that we work together in the greater public interest.

TAXATION

Mr. Norm Miller: My question is to the Premier. The McGuinty Liberals have grown so tired and out of touch, they've stopped trying to make sense of what the Premier is doing. Ontario families need gas to get to work, hydro to wash clothes and natural gas to heat their homes. They're squeezed by your tax hikes, hydro bill increases and tax hikes on your hydro bill increases. Last week, you sent out the finance minister to boast that you kept gas prices low by slapping an 8% HST on what families pay at the pump.

How much more evidence do Ontario families need that you're out of gas and hard-wired to increase taxes than seeing you add 8% to gas and hydro and then call it a tax cut?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: Our government is now implementing an \$11-billion personal tax cut across Ontario.

As of 9 o'clock this morning, here's what gas prices across the country were looking like, on average: in Vancouver, \$1.42 per litre; in Montreal, \$1.46 per litre; in Halifax, \$1.33 per litre; in Newfoundland, \$1.39 per litre; in New Brunswick, \$1.27 per litre; in Toronto, \$1.25 per litre.

We have implemented, working with the federal government, a comprehensive tax reform that lowers personal taxes. I note that the federal Conservatives are not cutting the GST on gasoline. I note that they're not cutting it on hydro. Why? Because they provide sales tax credits of roughly—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary.

Mr. Norm Miller: Again to the Premier: If we didn't have 8% HST, it would be 10 cents a litre cheaper in Ontario.

Premier, you'll say and do anything to stay in power, including calling the 8% HST you add to hydro, gas and hundreds of items families use every day a tax cut. You've broken your promises not to raise taxes so many times, even you have figured out it's time to give up.

Today you were asked if you'll promise not to raise taxes, and you said you'll keep doing what you've been

doing to Ontario families. Well, that means Ontario families better grab hold of their wallets before you do, because what you've been doing is creating new health taxes, raising sales taxes and adding eco taxes to everything. Is it any wonder Ontario families are bracing themselves to pay 2% more for HST—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you, Minister?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: We are in the process of implementing one of the largest personal tax cuts in Ontario history. We were delighted with the support of the federal government: almost \$4 billion that in part allowed us to do that.

We brought something forward called the Ontario child benefit, which is a large tax cut for very modest-income Ontarians. That member and his party voted against it. When we lowered the personal tax rate on the first \$37,000 of income for Ontarians to the lowest in the country, that member and his party voted against it. When we created the most generous sales tax credits in the country, that member and his party voted against them. And when we created the Ontario clean energy benefit, which lowers the price of electricity by 10%, that member and his party voted against it.

Our plan is the right plan for a better future for all Ontarians, for more jobs, better security, better education and better health care.

STOCK EXCHANGE

Mr. Gilles Bisson: My question is to the Minister of Finance. Minister, you will know that the London stock market made a bid on the Toronto Stock Exchange, to the consternation of many people in our province and many people in this country. There are plenty of people in the financial sector who saw this as a bad takeover bid on the part of the LSM, who saw Canadian sovereignty and the capital markets, quite frankly, being controlled by somebody else.

Now we have the Maple bid that's made up of the pension funds and a number of banks here in Canada. They're putting a bid of \$148 a share to buy the TSX.

My question to you is this: Can you tell us which particular bid your government supports?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: As I said over the weekend, we welcome the new bid. It is subject to a number of regulatory hurdles at the federal level, anti-combines legislation, so we welcome the bid. I am particularly delighted and I'm glad the NDP joined with me after I had expressed concerns on behalf of all Ontarians about the importance of a Canadian-owned stock exchange.

1100

Laughter.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: They can laugh all they want, but there was stone silence in many quarters when this happened and this government responded.

I look forward to having the opportunity to have a full evaluation of both bids. What I want to see is the bid that benefits Canadians the most, that shows that Canadians

are leaders in financial services. That's the bid that should win. I welcome the bid by our pensions and, by the way, the people who contribute to the pension plans: workers—men and women right across Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: As I told the Toronto Star the other day, the minister has set his finger in the air and he's trying to figure out which way the wind is blowing.

You're trying now to say that this is a federal government responsibility when it comes to the approval of this bid. You know that is not the case. The OSC is under the responsibility of this Legislature and this government.

So I'm going to ask you this: The committee did some very good work in taking a look at the takeover bid on the part of the LSM. Are you prepared to reconstitute the committee that looked at this bid and allow us to take a look at what the Maple bid means to Ontario and Canada and what conditions we should put to the bid, if any?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: The proponents of the Maple bid have indicated that they do in fact require anti-combines approval out of Ottawa, which is appropriate. Yes, they require OSC recognition on the 10% rule.

What is important for us to recognize is that a group of our largest financial institutions, banks and pensions, representing the provinces of Alberta, Ontario and Quebec, have come together as Canadians and put in an alternative bid. I think that is welcome and I think it is healthy. That bid needs to go through considerable scrutiny of regulators, particularly combines regulators in Ottawa. But as a Canadian, I welcome it. I believe that our stock exchange is an important national asset, and I believe we can compete and win on the global stage. I know all Ontarians share that view.

ENERGY POLICIES

Ms. Helena Jaczek: My question is for the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. Minister, yesterday during question period the Leader of the Opposition made a number of alarming statements such as, "Sky-rocketing hydro bills hurt families and they kill jobs." Last week, he said he wants to cancel the Samsung deal and eliminate the feed-in tariff program should his PC Party be elected in October.

I am extremely puzzled by these statements. As I think everybody knows, the member for Newmarket–Aurora, a long-time member of the PC caucus, has been in the energy business for years, and it has been reported that he has invested in a business that has applied to the FIT program, so I would like to ask the minister to explain what impact the opposition leader's statements have on attracting businesses to Ontario.

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: I am delighted to answer this question, because it's important that businesspeople around the world know that Ontario is open for business. You just wouldn't know that if you had to listen to members of the opposition who are making wild and irresponsible statements about green energy policy that is simply killing jobs—not killing jobs in October; killing

jobs right now. It's these opposition members who want to talk about sweetheart deals when they created the mother of all sweetheart deals when they were the government. We are busy creating jobs; they were busy with sweetheart deals. And the truth is that their own caucus members don't agree necessarily with their leader's position. Their leader's position is killing jobs in Ontario today. We are determined to fight for those jobs in Newmarket—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Ms. Helena Jaczek: Since the Leader of the Opposition revealed his desire to kill the Samsung deal and the FIT program last week, many companies right across Ontario have come forward to express their dissatisfaction and frustration with the PC leader's statements. Yesterday, a group of Ottawa businesses specializing in renewable energy technology sent an official letter to the Leader of the Opposition, calling on him to reconsider his opposition—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I remind the member again to tie this into government policy and not a position of one of the opposition parties.

Ms. Helena Jaczek: The firms stated that the green energy economy is revitalizing the manufacturing sector and creating well-paying, high-skilled jobs. They said that the opposition leader's pledge to scrap the—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Question?

Ms. Helena Jaczek: On this note, Mr. Speaker, since we have established that the Leader of the Opposition's plan is a job-killer, can you explain—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Minister?

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: Once again this morning—and virtually every morning—I receive letters from investors who want jobs in Ontario. But this is a copy of a letter that was sent to the Leader of the—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Nepean. The member from Renfrew. The member from Simcoe-Grey.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock. Minister of Finance. Minister of Energy.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Start the clock.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I don't need any assistance in the chair from the member from Renfrew—Nipissing-Pembroke, thank you.

Minister?

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: I don't want to talk about sweetheart deals unless we're talking about the ones from the Leader of the Opposition. While he was a cabinet minister—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Start the clock. Member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Bruce.

I'd just remind the minister to please talk about government policies.

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: Government policies in Ontario are creating jobs. The Green Energy Act is creating jobs. Members of the opposition are fighting. They want to rip up contracts. We wish they would have ripped up contracts to Leslie Noble, to Tom Long and to Deb Hutton. Let's talk about those sweetheart deals.

We're talking about jobs, a feed-in tariff that creates jobs and members of the Conservative caucus who are having jobs created in their own ridings—and they are killing those jobs. We will be heading to those very ridings to show the people of Ontario the jobs that they are going to fight against and the ones that we are creating.

ENERGY POLICIES

Mr. John Yakabuski: To the Minister of Energy: An Ontario PC government will give Ontario families relief on their hydro bills; Premier McGuinty will not. In fact, he's telling Ontario families—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock. Minister of Research and Innovation. Minister of Economic Development. Member from Bruce.

Please continue.

Mr. John Yakabuski: In fact, he's telling Ontario families to buck up some more so he won't be embarrassed internationally for the bad deals he's signed.

What the Premier isn't telling families is that his FIT and Samsung deal has already made him an international laughingstock. Yesterday, *Malaya Business Insight*, a Filipino paper, mocked Premier McGuinty for sticking with his expensive energy experiments when Spain, Germany, China and even Korea have all scaled theirs back.

1110

Why won't Premier McGuinty spare our pocketbooks and reputation before his expensive energy experiments do more damage to both?

Hon. Brad Duguid: The member wants to talk about the positive impact our energy policies are having on Ontario families across this province. He and his leader should have joined the Premier and I this morning at Samco, where we met 60 people who are now back working again—laid off during the global recession, now back working again and supporting their families.

Let me share with you what one of them had to say. Mike Walker, a manufacturing engineer, said this: "My daughters, aged 10 and 13, always speak of the environment, its protection and ways we can do our part. I found myself out of work during the recession and, coinciden-

tally, the growing solar industry provided me with a job opportunity that is close to my children's heart."

Why does the Leader of the Opposition want to put Mike out of work? Just when he and his family are getting back on their feet, why do they want to bring him back down again?

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. John Yakabuski: Premier McGuinty will say and do anything to stay in power. He's been caught trying to blame others for making him an international embarrassment. He also tried to avoid embarrassment by demanding "specifics" on the monetary penalty to cut our losses on the sweetheart Samsung deal that he made—

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: I'll give you a sweetheart deal you should have ripped up.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Please continue.

Mr. John Yakabuski: His interest in the specifics conveniently comes and goes, or maybe he'd be more specific about which cabinet ministers actually gang-tackled George Smitherman when he gave the details of the shady deal; maybe he'd reveal the specific details that got them so upset. Was it the half a billion dollars you promised this multinational foreign conglomerate without getting a single guarantee of one job in this province, not a single guarantee of a job?

Hon. Brad Duguid: The member opposite can try to divert any way he wants. The fact of the matter is, last week, your leader came forward with a plan that's going to destroy our clean energy economy and kill thousands of clean energy jobs—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The honourable member from Renfrew, you just asked the question, and you know the standing orders. At any time, if you're not satisfied with an answer, you have the ability to call for a late show.

Mr. Mike Colle: He does this every day.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Nepean and the member from Oxford.

Minister?

Hon. Brad Duguid: Just to bring this home to the members opposite, these are real people, real jobs and real families that their policy is going to severely impact.

I want to share with you what Gary Cummings had to say; he's a lead hand operator at Samco. "This is the first and only job I've ever had that has had an effect on each and every person in my" family.

Those workers are really, really proud of what they're doing. Their families are proud of what they're doing. They're proud to be part of an initiative that's building a cleaner, more prosperous future for us here today but, more importantly, for our kids. Why doesn't your leader get that?

CORONER'S INQUEST

Mr. Howard Hampton: My question is for the Attorney General—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock. I'm going to warn the Minister of Economic Development and Trade and the member from Nepean—Carleton. If you want to have your discussions, please take them outside this chamber. Be respectful of the other members. So, it's a final warning to each member.

Member from Kenora—Rainy River.

Mr. Howard Hampton: To the Attorney General: In October 2007, almost four years ago, two young First Nations people died in Thunder Bay. Inquests were ordered into their deaths. The families of the deceased young people asked Attorney General officials for information about whether the jury rolls, from which coroner's juries are selected, were representative. The AG official refused the request.

The Ontario Court of Appeal recently decided in favour of the First Nation families and said, "Their request for this information was quite reasonable. But they did not get any answers. Instead, they got the runaround. A lot of time and money might have been saved had the ministry ... simply provided this information."

Since then, more young people have died on the streets of Thunder Bay. Can the Attorney General explain giving the aggrieved families the runaround and wasting time and money while more young people die on the streets of Thunder Bay?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: We're all at one in saying that terrible tragedies have occurred. I know that those at every level with any hint of responsibility are searching for answers. I won't comment, as my friend has done, on the specifics of the coroner's process. We'll leave that; that is proceeding. But at every level for us, we're looking for answers. I would hope the federal government is, because it actually funds the school. It is a private school run by the First Nations. I know everybody is interested in finding answers and working very hard to find them and the coroner's process will, in due course, provide some recommendations.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Howard Hampton: It's not me who's commenting. This is the senior justice of the Ontario Court of Appeal, the highest court in Ontario. It says that your government hasn't been doing everything it can to get to the bottom of these issues. It says that your government has been giving the aggrieved families the runaround, that you've been wasting time and wasting money.

The Deputy Grand Chief of Nishnawbe Aski Nation says, "Tragically, there has been another death in our communities and yet the Attorney General claims that Ontario is doing everything it can. After the deaths of seven of our teenagers in similar circumstances since 2000, I do not accept that this government can claim credibly that" they're doing everything they can.

Minister, how can you waste time, waste money and give families the runaround while more—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you, Minister?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: I agree with the Deputy Grand Chief that every death is a tragedy. We want to find answers for every death, every tragedy. We are working very hard within this government to find those answers. The coroner's inquest will hear evidence and, in due course, provide us with information.

I know my friend will want to direct some inquiries to the level of government responsible for the education of these young people because they came from their communities to another community to be educated. I know they came, funded, to a private school run by the First Nation, and I know everybody should be working as hard as they can to find answers.

SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

Mr. Jeff Leal: My question today is for the Minister of Community and Social Services. Today in our gallery, we have some great Ontarians who are supported by Community Living. It's Community Living Day in the Legislature for all the work that member agencies do throughout Ontario for people with disabilities. This organization is a source of tremendous support for tens of thousands of individuals. As a government, we have continued to support Community Living agencies to ensure that all Ontarians can reach their full potential.

Minister, how will this government continue to move forward in partnership with Community Living agencies to support our collective goal of assisting individuals with disabilities and transforming the development services sector for the better?

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: I'd like to thank the member from Peterborough, as well as recognizing Community Living Ontario and their member organizations for all the work they do.

Community Living Ontario works so that people with developmental disabilities are included in all aspects of community life. As a government, we must continue to support community inclusiveness so that individuals can live closer to their friends and family.

Community Living Toronto's Lights project is a great example of inclusion and action and a project that I am pleased our government supports. This innovative program brings families and community leaders together with the agency to help individuals find long-term housing that meets their needs.

I look forward to our continued partnership with Community Living Ontario.

1120

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Jeff Leal: Thank you, Minister. This year's budget made no mention of funding for development services. As you know, people with developmental disabili-

ties in families are anxious that development services are not being gutted by this government.

I meet regularly with clients, their families and community support agencies who advocate for more funding. Many families in my riding have told me that they want to keep their loved ones at home as long as possible, but families face daily challenges that make this very difficult. Others are aging parents who can no longer support their children.

How is the government supporting the developmental services sector?

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Since 2003, we have invested over \$550 million in new funding for developmental services—a 54% increase. This year, we are increasing funding for a further \$40 million to help those facing emergency and crisis situations and to increase funding to Passport and special services at home.

Since 2003, 2,900 more adults with developmental disabilities live and receive supports close to their families and friends; 4,800 more people receive SSAH; and 2,700 more adults receive Passport. I am proud to say that the McGuinty government has been and will continue to be there for those with developmental disabilities and those who care for them.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Ms. Sylvia Jones: My question is also for the Minister of Community and Social Services.

Minister, all Peel MPPs received a letter from a Community Living agency which was shocked to learn of your government's secret deal with OPSEU, which provides government employees with a 3% wage increase. Meanwhile, multiple Community Living agencies across the province are currently negotiating agreements with CUPE, but fear your secret deal with OPSEU will undermine their bargaining efforts. If agreements are not reached, we will once again be dealing with labour unrest in the developmental services sector.

Minister, how do you suggest Community Living groups hold the line with zero increase while your government gives out 3%?

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: To the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: I am particularly proud of our government's achievement working with Community Living right across the province. There is always more to do, and we will continue to work with those families.

Through the public and broader public sector, we negotiate some 4,300 collective agreements governing every aspect of work life in the public and broader public sectors. The average rates of settlement are coming down, which we think is an important achievement. We are achieving zero and zero on a number of arrangements, and we have more to do.

The choices that we've made are about enhancing public services as we move back to balance. I'm pleased that the credit rating agencies have maintained Ontario's credit rating through the greatest downturn since the

Depression. We look forward to working with our partners in the broader public sector on a range of issues over the coming four years.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Minister, you negotiated in secret and then you hang the community development agencies out to dry.

You know your government's secret deal with OPSEU puts the developmental services sector at a disadvantage once again. It puts individuals with intellectual disabilities in the same position they were in five years ago, while striking workers picketed outside their supportive living residences. This is why I introduced Bill 83, the Protecting Vulnerable People Against Picketing Act.

Minister, will you commit today to schedule Bill 83 for public hearings so that this legislation can move forward?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: The member opposite knows that the House leaders of all three parties make arrangements on that, so it's really not something that I have any say over.

What I can say to my colleague opposite and to her bill is that we will not go back to their style of labour relations—26 million teaching days lost. We've had eight years of peace and stability in our sector. Unlike Kevin Gaudet, the Tory candidate who says that we need a Wisconsin up here, we reject that. We think that's a mistake.

The member herself indicated to the media earlier this week that she wants to rip up the OPP contract. I wonder if that reflects Tory policy or if it's yet another division within the ranks over there of a party that simply doesn't have its act together and isn't ready to govern.

LONG-TERM CARE

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Premier. Yesterday in Windsor, the Premier was asked when families would finally see some work start on a long-term-care home at the former Grace site. On the agonizing four-year process, the Premier said, "We're getting close to the limit, but I think we're going to push a little bit more." But this government has already pushed. They've pushed Windsor families beyond their limits.

What is the Premier's absolute deadline for construction to begin before he pulls the plug on this developer?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Health.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I'm happy to have a chance to respond to this question again. I can assure you that the members from Windsor have ensured that I am up to date on this issue. They are pushing very hard to have the long-term-care beds available for the people of Windsor and the Windsor area.

We've had great success building more long-term-care beds. We've got 9,000 more long-term-care beds built since when we took office. This one particular project is very troubling. We're working with the developer on it. We're having daily updates, and we are determined to get these beds built.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I would agree; it's troubling, all right.

Major demolition has yet to occur on the site, and the developer doesn't even have a building permit yet. Meanwhile, Windsor's long-term-care system has reached a literal crisis, and patients are waiting longer and longer.

Does the Premier have a plan to fix this mess, or is he just going to push Windsor's hospitals until they hit their limit?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I can assure the member opposite that we are absolutely determined to get these beds built in Windsor as quickly as possible. There have been problems with this particular developer; there's no question about it. We are working to find a solution. We're working hard because we have a responsibility to the people of Windsor to get these beds operating as quickly as possible.

RETIREMENT HOMES

Mr. David Zimmer: My question is for the minister responsible for seniors. My question is about regulating retirement homes. The Retirement Homes Act was passed in June of last year, and it's sort of up in the air right now. My Willowdale constituents, especially seniors and their families, have been pressing me to find out about the status of this law.

Minister, in light of the recent stories in the media profiling abuse and neglect in care homes around the province, they really want to know what's happening with this act. It has passed, but when is it going to come into force? When is it going to take bite?

Hon. Sophia Aggelonitis: Thank you very much to the member from Willowdale for that question. It gives me an opportunity to inform the House on the status of the Retirement Homes Act.

Today is an important day for our seniors in Ontario who choose to live in a retirement home anywhere across our province. I'm proud to say that our government is taking immediate action to further protect our loved ones living in a retirement home before the Retirement Homes Act is in full force.

Today, we're announcing a few things. One is that we're increasing the availability of the CRIS line, which is the complaints response and information service line. We're making it mandatory for suspected harm to be reported to the registrar of the Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority, and we're also obligating the registrar to order an immediate inspection on reports of abuse or neglect.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. David Zimmer: Thank you, Minister. I know that when fully enforced, the act and its current regulations are going to cover a wide range of important areas, including care and safety standards, licensing, inspections, enforcement and so on. But for now, Minister, for today and tomorrow, starting right away, how can my constituents, the seniors and their families, get some detailed information on how the measures will

protect their families from abuse and neglect? They really want to know quickly and in clear, simple language where they can get detailed information about how the act works and, in particular, how their complaints are going to be dealt with.

Hon. Sophia Aggelonitis: Thank you very much, again, to the member. The member is right. All of us want to know that our parents, our grandparents, our seniors are safe when they decide to live in retirement homes. That's why, today, our government has made it clear that we have a zero-tolerance approach towards abuse or neglect in retirement homes across the province.

1130

We are expanding the hours of the CRIS line by more than 100%. That means an additional 44 hours. The hot-line number is 1-800-361-7251. It will be open seven days a week, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. What's more is that we will make sure that the complaints helpline is posted in all retirement homes in Ontario.

Regulating retirement homes in the province of Ontario is the right thing to do, and this government is moving forward.

SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: My question is for the Minister of Education. Minister, I know that your Liberal rural caucus is meeting to discuss issues affecting rural Ontario. One of the big issues is your school transportation policy. As you know, it is destroying many family-owned rural businesses. I have the list of casualties here.

When your government boasts about phantom green jobs that don't exist, I have here a letter from Hammond Transportation in which Mr. Hammond writes that, to date, your government has forced 15 independent busing companies out of business. With them also go hundreds of jobs—jobs that actually do exist.

Minister, will you commit to doing what we have said we would do: halt your small-business- and job-killing policy and review it?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: I'm happy to have this opportunity to update the House. I thank all the members in this assembly who have taken the time to bring this issue to my attention—many members of my caucus as well. As a result of their work, and because we are in regular contact with our stakeholders, we have been working with the School Bus Operators' Association as well as the Independent School Bus Operators Association. I met with one group last week; I will be meeting with the other this week.

I'm sure the honourable member would agree that we want to be sure that we are getting the best value for our dollar. I believe it's important that we get both sides of this issue together and work on a solution. I believe that is where the solution is to be found, by working together—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary? The member for Leeds–Grenville.

Mr. Steve Clark: Minister, the buck stops with you. This policy comes directly from your office. You and your government will ultimately be the ones to blame for the destruction of Ontario's independent busing industry. In Leeds–Grenville, your policies are quickly pushing many independent bus operators to the brink of extinction. Recently, I've spoken to two companies—Brockville City Bus Lines and Healey Transportation—who are extremely concerned that you've recklessly pushed forward with this ill-conceived policy.

Minister, what am I to tell the people of Leeds–Grenville, the local independent bus operators and their employees, when you and your government put them out of business?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: I'm surprised that when the honourable member was speaking with his constituents, they wouldn't have indicated to him that they're actually meeting with me this week and that they've already spoken with the Premier about this. We have been listening very carefully. We are eager to get their input and we are eager to work with them to resolve this issue, because everyone in this assembly wants to be sure that, number one, our students arrive at school safely, and number two, we are getting the best value for our tax dollar.

The folks on the other side sometimes talk about sole-sourced contracts, and I know they would recognize that some would even describe the way that we engage bus operators might be that. That's why we want to work with bus operators. We want to understand how we can ensure that we've got their excellent service in place for our students—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

PHOTO IDENTIFICATION

Mr. Peter Tabuns: My question is to the Minister of Transportation. On June 3, 2008, the Photo Card Act was passed to provide for photo identification. One part of the legislation allowed for the provision of non-driver's-licence photo ID for the public. It's now almost June 2011: three years later. When will the government start issuing these cards?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I think the member opposite knows that we are committed to delivering an Ontario photo card. We know that photo ID is required for opening a bank account, cashing a cheque, applying for a loan, gaining admittance to bars, boarding a domestic flight, renting movies and so on. We know that there's a segment of the population that does not have a driver's licence, which is often used for identification, and they need another piece of identification. We're committed to doing that. We'll be bringing this forward soon.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I've had a number of constituents contact me about this issue, and the minister has outlined the reasons why such a card is needed. Three years have passed. Will the cards be issued this decade?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I am absolutely convinced that the photo card will be issued in this decade. In fact, I predict that it will be issued much, much sooner than this decade.

MUNICIPALITIES

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. In my riding of Ottawa Centre, there is a constant discussion regarding the relationship our government has formed with the city over the past eight years. Specifically, constituents in my riding have expressed concerns regarding some of the promises made by the leader of the official opposition and his intention to make broad cuts across the government. Similar to former Premier Mike Harris before him, the Leader of the Opposition is promising voters a simpler, smaller, less costly level of government. These were the exact same words used by Harris in 1995, and he ended up downloading extra costs onto municipal taxpayers.

Can the minister please provide details on the municipal uploading process and how much my constituents are saving?

Hon. Rick Bartolucci: I want to thank the member for the question because it's a very, very important question to all the municipalities across Ontario. But I want to acknowledge the presence of the mayor of Ottawa, Jim Watson. He clearly understands the importance of the uploading we're doing with municipalities.

You know, this year Ottawa is going to see \$66 million with regard to uploads and transfer of services. The reality is, when you get this type of co-operation between the municipalities and the province, the mayor of Ottawa, the city council of Ottawa—Ottawa will be able to use \$60 million to put towards housing. Now, that's a good partnership and that's a good plan.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: Constituents in my riding of Ottawa Centre will be pleased to hear this government's unwavering commitment to the uploading process, not to mention the additional cost savings that are clearly being applied in a variety of ways across this great province, as evidenced in your answer.

Minister, in your answer, you touched upon the relationship we have formed with municipalities across this province over the past eight years. I was hoping the minister could elaborate a little bit more about the quality of relationships we have formed since 2003 and how different the landscape is today, compared with where we were just 10 years ago.

Hon. Rick Bartolucci: Thanks very much again, to the member, for the question.

You know, it is all about respect and understanding. It's all about forging the type of partnership that can have positive results for municipalities. So unlike previous governments, we will not amalgamate municipalities. Unlike previous governments, we won't download services.

Ours is about respecting a partnership that we've entered into. Why? Because it's good for the people of Ontario and it's good for the people who live in the municipalities. We will not use the same approach previous governments have used. Our approach is one based on respect, understanding and equal partners, to ensure that at the end of the day, each and every citizen in each and every municipality across the province of Ontario is treated with respect, not beaten up, like previous governments. We're about understanding. We're about ensuring that we work with municipalities. We're about—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The time for question period has ended.

DEFERRED VOTES

TIME ALLOCATION

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): We have a deferred vote on the motion by Ms. Smith for allocation of time on Bill 186, An Act to amend the Tobacco Tax Act.

Call in the members; this will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1139 to 1144.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): On May 16, 2011, Ms. Smith moved government notice of motion 75. All those in favour will rise one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

Ayes

Aggelonitis, Sophia	Duncan, Dwight	Naqvi, Yasir
Albanese, Laura	Gravelle, Michael	Oraziotti, David
Arthurs, Wayne	Hoskins, Eric	Pendergast, Leeanna
Balkissoon, Bas	Hoy, Pat	Phillips, Gerry
Bartolucci, Rick	Jaczek, Helena	Pupatello, Sandra
Bentley, Christopher	Jeffrey, Linda	Qaadri, Shafiq
Best, Margaret	Johnson, Rick	Ramal, Khalil
Bradley, James J.	Kular, Kuldip	Ramsay, David
Broten, Laurel C.	Kwinter, Monte	Rinaldi, Lou
Brown, Michael A.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Ruprecht, Tony
Caplan, David	Leal, Jeff	Sandals, Liz
Carroll, Aileen	Levac, Dave	Sergio, Mario
Chan, Michael	Matthews, Deborah	Smith, Monique
Colle, Mike	Mauro, Bill	Sousa, Charles
Craitor, Kim	McGuinty, Dalton	Takhar, Harinder S.
Crozier, Bruce	McNeely, Phil	Van Bommel, Maria
Delaney, Bob	Meilleur, Madeleine	Wilkinson, John
Dickson, Joe	Mitchell, Carol	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Dombrowsky, Leona	Moridi, Reza	Zimmer, David
Duguid, Brad	Murray, Glen R.	

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Those opposed?

Nays

Arnott, Ted	Hillier, Randy	O'Toole, John
Bailey, Robert	Horwath, Andrea	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Barrett, Toby	Jones, Sylvia	Prue, Michael
Bisson, Gilles	Klees, Frank	Savoline, Joyce
Chudleigh, Ted	Kormos, Peter	Sterling, Norman W.
Clark, Steve	MacLeod, Lisa	Tabuns, Peter
Dunlop, Garfield	Marchese, Rosario	Wilson, Jim
Elliott, Christine	Miller, Norm	Witmer, Elizabeth
Gélinas, France	Miller, Paul	Yakubski, John
Hampton, Howard	Munro, Julia	
Hardeman, Ernie	Murdoch, Bill	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 59; the nays are 31.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

ONTARIO FOREST TENURE MODERNIZATION ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 SUR LA MODERNISATION DU RÉGIME DE TENURE FORESTIÈRE EN ONTARIO

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of Bill 151, An Act to enact the Ontario Forest Tenure Modernization Act, 2011 and to amend the Crown Forest Sustainability Act, 1994 / Projet de loi 151, Loi édictant la Loi de 2011 sur la modernisation du régime de tenure forestière en Ontario et modifiant la Loi de 1994 sur la durabilité des forêts de la Couronne.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Call in the members. This is a five-minute bell.

Interjection: Same vote.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Agreed? Agreed.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 59; the nays are 31.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I declare the motion carried.

Third reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

There being no further votes, this House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1148 to 1500.

WEARING OF SWEATER

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound on a point of order.

Mr. Bill Murdoch: Mr. Speaker, I'd like unanimous consent to be able to wear the Owen Sound Attack sweater for our statement.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Agreed? Agreed.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Frank Klees: This is a very special day in the Legislature. It's Community Living Day at the Legislature, and I take great pride in introducing some of the visitors from Community Living Newmarket/Aurora District. My colleague will be introducing the balance of them. I wanted to share the riches with my colleague Julia Munro.

It's a pleasure to introduce Janet Lorimer, the executive director; Dr. Salvatore Amenta, the second vice-president; Andrea Sager, director of the board; Nathan Miller; Irene Cvetkovski-Dukic; John Couturier; Kim Middlebrook; Patricia Webb; Michelle Kane; Stacey

Jackson; Cara Matt; Anita Willett; Zachary Birch; Sharon Winterton; Brittany Santa Maria; Heather Stratton; and Dalia Cicienue. I ask members to give them a warm welcome.

Mr. Rick Johnson: I'd like to introduce, from Community Living Kawartha Lakes, Merla McGill, Rick Semple, Randy Netherton and Lisa Burns. Welcome.

Mr. John O'Toole: On behalf of myself, Jerry Ouellette from Oshawa, and Christine Elliott from Whitby–Oshawa, I'd like to welcome the members from Community Living Oshawa/Clarington. They are Garry Cooke, Hailey Tilling, Irene Molloy, Jon Lee, Rob Romanuk and Janet Hutchuk. Welcome to Queen's Park on Community Living Day.

Mr. Bruce Crozier: Speaker, I'm pleased and proud to introduce to you guests from Community Living Essex County: Nancy Wallace-Gero, executive director; Barrie Keith, manager; Marg Prince, president of the board of directors; Lisa Raffoul, parent consultant; Robert Hickey from Queen's University; and especially Jessica Martin and Sterling Jolliffe, two young people supported by Community Living Essex County. Welcome.

Mrs. Julia Munro: As the member for Newmarket–Aurora mentioned a moment ago, I too have the privilege of being able to introduce those who have come from the Newmarket–Aurora district to join us here today, and welcome Kevin Moore, Sandy Kurtzer, Kim Davis, Maryrose Nakamura, Tamara Goldie, Tracey Harper, Joanne Stewart, Patsy Manktelow, Maria Curcio, Pat Townsend and Lindsay Willemse. Welcome to all of you.

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: I'm not going to go through the litany of names, because I'm just so terribly pleased that Community Living from Wallaceburg is here, as well as Middlesex Community Living from Strathroy. One group is here in the east gallery and the other is in the west gallery. We had a great time at lunch, and I hope that they've enjoyed their day so far at Queen's Park.

Mr. Bill Murdoch: I'd like to introduce Community Living Owen Sound, sitting up there. We have some people here from Wiarton—I think he just walked in now—and also from Walkerton over here. So we are well represented in Grey and Bruce today from Community Living.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Member from Trinity–Spadina.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Thank you, Speaker. I want to emphasize the importance of electrifying our urban transportation train system. Yesterday, I had the pleasure of meeting—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Sorry. To the honourable member, my apologies. We're still on the introduction of guests.

Member from Brant.

Mr. Dave Levac: While I welcome all of the participants for Community Living Day, I bring special attention to the members from Brant and also from a very interesting golf tournament we hold annually—and I'm on the committee—called Circle of Friends, through

Community Living Brant. We raise money to help those clients befriend at high school levels. To all of those people who are here today: Thank you very much, and thank you for the gift that you are.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I wanted to take this opportunity—there are a number of Community Living organizations represented here today—on behalf of all of us, just to say welcome and thank you.

I look up and see my good friend Marty Graff from Tillsonburg. It may be in the member from Oxford's riding, but Tillsonburg serves much of my riding, and it serves the member from Haldimand-Norfolk's riding too.

Thank you for everything that you do to be so supportive. We genuinely say thanks and welcome you all to Queen's Park today.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

KIDS' FISHING DAY

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette: I'd like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to all the groups and volunteers who worked so hard for our 11th annual Kids' Fishing Day at Heber Down Conservation Area this last Saturday.

The poor weather held off just long enough to allow for a great day of fishing and activities. A great crowd of kids and parents alike braved the elements and came out to take part in a fun-filled day of fishing and outdoor activities.

There was no cost for the event, and the children were able to take part in many activities, including conservation, wetland and trapping displays, lure making, face painting and fish identification.

Numerous groups and organizations gave their time and effort to this special day, and I'd like to thank them—Ducks Unlimited; Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority; Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, Zone E; Kids, Cops and Canadian Tire; Muskies Canada; Ministry of Natural Resources, Aurora district; Ontario Sporting Dog Association; Ontario Deerhound Association; Oshawa Community Health Centre; South Oshawa Teen Council; Durham Regional Police; Pickering Rod and Gun Club; Lindsay Trappers Council; Valu-Mart Lindsay; Emm's Sports; Black Angus Fine Meats and Game; Eastview Boys and Girls Club; Simcoe Hall Settlement House; South Central Ontario Fish and Wildlife Association; W.T. Hawkins; Calvary Baptist Church; Optimist Club of Oshawa; and the Westmount Kiwanis Club—for all their help, and especially Frank Wick, who handled the parking on his own. As always, special thanks go out to Walter Oster and the Toronto Sportsmen's Show, who contribute greatly to the success of Kids' Fishing Day across Ontario.

There's an old adage that says, "Fish bite best before the storm." Well, certainly, this was the case on Saturday, and numerous rainbow trout were caught by the young

anglers. Although it was cold and windy and rainy, the weather couldn't dampen the spirits of tens of hundreds of kids who enjoyed a great day outdoors.

Thanks again to everyone who worked tirelessly despite the elements and made this day a huge success for the children of our community.

RIDING OF HALIBURTON-KAWARTHA LAKES-BROCK

Mr. Rick Johnson: I rise today to share a secret, but you have to promise to tell at least two friends. Here it is: Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock is without comparison. It is home to exceptional hospitality, unparalleled tourism and distinctive business ventures. It is also home to 10 outstanding municipalities, and I'm honoured to partner with them all tomorrow as we bring some of the best of Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock here to Queen's Park for the very first HKLB Day.

The event will showcase just some of the tourism, tastes and talents of Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock. Here you'll find green energy entrepreneurs; the geocaching capital of Canada; tourism opportunities, including festivals, trails, wildlife reserves, theatre and luxurious accommodations; small business success stories; historic and cultural centres; farm-to-table freshness; and all the outdoor leisure and sporting activities you can handle—and, yes, there will be ice cream.

Our mayors, reeves, CAOs, and economic development and tourism staff do an exceptional job at raising the profile of our cultural and commercial climate. I'm pleased to work alongside them, and I thank them for all that they do.

I also thank all the exhibitors who have enthusiastically signed on for HKLB Day. These men and women are the best PR we could ask for, and because of them, the secret is out.

ANNE JARRETT

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Yesterday, I received some bad news; it was very sad news. Anne Jarrett passed away. She was 106.

She was a great lady in our community, one whom many of us politicians, whether it was at any level of government—municipal, federal or provincial—often took the time to talk to when we would visit a cherished institution in our community, Carleton Lodge, off Prince of Wales in Barrhaven.

Anne was remarkable because, at her age—I've been able to share with her many of her birthdays after she turned 100—she would often tell us stories about her life and what it was like. She was a remarkable treasure. She came to Canada, as many did, from England in—she was born in 1905, so when she was eight years old. She attended Lisgar Collegiate, which is an important school still today in Ottawa.

1510

But what was really remarkable about Anne Jarrett was that she worked for external affairs. She worked

directly for Lester B. Pearson, first when he was first secretary and later as secretary of state. She got to work on Parliament Hill in the east block, which is now home to most of Canada's senators. She worked right next to the office of Mackenzie King when he was Prime Minister at the time. She was still devoted to her family and still very devoted to her extracurricular activities, which included, they say, dating and recreation.

She also had this great experience in 1943 when she was invited to the Quebec conference, which was an important meeting concerning the war, which was held by President Roosevelt, Prime Minister Churchill and Prime Minister King. In 1945, she was asked to go to San Francisco for three months to help with the birth of the United Nations—if you can believe that living history that those of us in Nepean—Carleton were able to witness so many years later in her life.

She was married to Gordon McDonald, who was an RCMP officer, for 25 years. Upon his death, she married Walter Jarrett at the age of 71 and spent another 25 years with him. He passed away many years ago, but as I said, she contributed to our community. She's been a friend and, I must say, I'll miss her dearly, as I know all of her residents and friends will at Carleton Lodge.

After 106 years on this planet earth, she's decided it's time to go to a place that's better than this. We'll miss her humour, her smile and her love of life. I know all members of this Legislature thank Anne and those of her generation for building this great nation and this great province.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I want to emphasize the importance of electrifying our urban transportation train system. Yesterday, I had the pleasure of meeting with a number of activists from the Clean Train Coalition at their Railbender 2 party at the Gladstone Hotel. These volunteers provide thousands of hours for a cause they feel will help to improve the lives of all urban dwellers.

These volunteers point out that the UK's Network Rail is able to electrify 1.6 kilometres of track each night without disruption to daily regular passenger rail service. This is 10 times faster than the timeline Metrolinx published in their study. At this pace, Ontario could electrify either the Georgetown or Lakeshore routes by 2018, with the other priority corridor coming online a year or two later.

Instead of using outdated diesel trains, GO Transit could also reap substantial benefits by using electric multiple-unit trains that would allow for faster travel, quieter operations and more service at more locations.

By implementing these changes, both residents and the province of Ontario could attain substantial transit improvements and financial benefits without the pollution caused by diesel.

I would like to extend my support to the Clean Train Coalition and their volunteers for their incredible work

and encourage both Metrolinx and the Ontario government to introduce the changes CTC is proposing.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Mr. Phil McNeely: Last Monday, I entered the debate on who has supported the smoke-free legislation in Ottawa and in this province. There's no doubt that Ottawa led the way with Chiarelli, Munter, Cushman, Meilleur and McNeely. The Conservatives fought it all the way.

Ottawa failed to get the cosmetic pesticide ban as the Conservatives teamed up with the pesticide companies against the doctors at CHEO, and the bylaw failed. The same people—Chiarelli, Meilleur, McNeely, Munter, Cushman and many more—worked to pass this bylaw.

Fast-forward to the province of Ontario: We're almost out of coal generation. We have banned the cosmetic use of pesticides, and my McNeely amendment to the Smoke-Free Ontario Act removed advertising from retail, the power walls.

Our urban streams have much less chemicals in them, our air quality is better, and asthma is down. But much more has to be done.

Our Arctic summer ice cover will be gone in 2030, and all the Conservatives are thinking about is a shorter shipping route between markets and access to the hydrocarbons in the Arctic that will increase greenhouse gases. Our children and grandchildren will suffer the impacts of climate change, and the Conservatives again do not care.

I encourage you all to read James Hansen's book *Storms of My Grandchildren*.

I would like an apology from the Conservatives, and concerned parents across this province would like an apology from the Conservatives, for their consistent opposition to clean water, clean air and their denial of climate change. The latter is a pre-eminent issue of today. The time for action is quickly running out.

HOCKEY

Mr. Bill Murdoch: On Sunday, May 15, 2011, the Owen Sound Attack of the Ontario Hockey League won its first provincial championship in an exciting seven-game series against the Mississauga St. Michael's Majors. I'd like to take this opportunity to recognize the outstanding play of both the Attack and the Majors as they showcased the very best the OHL has to offer. It was a hard-fought series, but in the end it was our Owen Sound Attack that rose to the occasion in a rousing 3-2 overtime victory.

This championship represents many years of hard work on the part of this small-town organization. I'd like to congratulate the coaches, management and the owners for making this championship possible. I have to thank our dedicated fans for travelling across the province and the US and for supporting our team every step of the way. And of course I have to say how proud I am of the young players who earned this championship. It was

through their skill and determination that they took on Ontario's best and won.

Few things are more ingrained in our culture than the sport of hockey, and nowhere is that more true than in Grey and Bruce. From London to Plymouth, Windsor and Mississauga, our small town and its young players beat the odds to win its first provincial championship. The Attack are an inspiration for us all.

As we move forward to face Canada's best at the Memorial Cup championship, I have just one more thing to say: Go, Attack, go!

COMMUNITY LIVING

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: I'd like to take this opportunity to recognize the Community Living groups that serve my riding of Lambton-Kent-Middlesex. They include Community Living Sarnia-Lambton, Community Living Wallaceburg and Middlesex Community Living. These agencies have been providing service to the communities in my riding since the 1950s and 1960s. In the years since their inception, they have evolved and grown to help individuals achieve their fullest potential while inspiring inclusive, respectful and accepting communities.

The communities served by these local Community Living organizations have held a number of events this year to celebrate Community Living Month. The Sarnia-Lambton Community Living mayor's breakfast was held on May 6, and Lambton College was presented with a hero award for their community integration for co-operative education programs.

Community Living Wallaceburg held a box lunch event, with 60 volunteers assembling and delivering 1,300 boxed lunches to residents and businesses across Chatham-Kent.

On May 12, the mayor of Strathroy-Caradoc hosted a community breakfast for Middlesex Community Living. The Strathroy Rockets junior B hockey team was honoured for their commitment to Middlesex Community Living. This coming hockey season, Community Living in Middlesex will be cheering for the Strathroy Rockets, as Community Living is the team captain's charity of choice, and October 2 will be Community Living Day at the game. I know they'll all be there cheering them on.

These events wouldn't be possible without the continued dedication and support of the employees, volunteers and our local communities, and I'm certainly very pleased that they're here to share this with us today.

RIDING OF NORTHUMBERLAND- QUINTE WEST

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: It's my pleasure to share with you and the rest of the House today some great news about my great riding of Northumberland-Quinte West, a riding that's getting better and better by the day.

Our government has put funding programs in place to provide opportunities for expansion in marketing busi-

nesses, which result in the creation and the maintenance of many, many jobs. Northumberland-Quinte West has seen significant results from these programs. To name a few: Quaker Oats, Weston Bakeries, Mirmil manufacturing, Canadian Blast Freezers, Horizon Plastics, Nestlé, Sabic Investments, Norampac, Weetabix, Metro Paper, Go Green Cobourg, Cam Tran, Quinte West YMCA, Deca Cables, Grills Orchards, Empire Cheese and many more.

In addition to the government's investments that have created over 700 new jobs, we have also created thousands of jobs through funding to rehabilitate local arenas, local roads, bridges, water plants, broadband, sports fields, playgrounds, new schools, hospital expansions and many downtown revitalization programs.

The world just suffered through one of the worst recessions in history. When I sat down and listed just some of the funding this government has provided—funding that is creating jobs in my riding—I'm not surprised that Ontario is leading the way in recovering from the recession. I'm proud to represent a government that's invested in our future by investing in creating jobs.

1520

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Mr. Bill Mauro: Green energy paid a visit to Thunder Bay last week, when I was pleased to announce \$1 million from our government to support a \$5-million bio-energy plant being constructed at Confederation College in my riding of Thunder Bay-Atikokan. This plant will create enough green renewable energy to heat the college's Shuniah Building and the new REACH facility, a project we supported with \$15 million, saving Confederation over \$300,000 per year in energy costs. This project will create 50 construction jobs, six permanent jobs and allow for applied research and learning opportunities for 200 students per year.

In my riding I've also worked very hard to see the conversion of the two coal plants, one to wood biomass in Atikokan and the other to natural gas in Thunder Bay. Our party is the only party that committed to these conversions. They will secure over 200 permanent jobs, create \$300 million worth of construction work for our region's building trade unions and secure a significant tax base for the city of Thunder Bay and the town of Atikokan. These are green energy projects; make no mistake.

Then there's the Lower Mattagami project, near Kapuskasing, which will soon have approximately 350 carpenters and labourers from the Thunder Bay building trade union halls working on that project. These are just a few of the green energy projects that are creating new jobs and providing a huge economic boost to Thunder Bay and Atikokan.

The leader of the Conservatives has been very clear: He doesn't support green energy projects, so the projects I just mentioned are exactly the kind of projects—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you.

COMMUNITY LIVING DAY
JOURNÉE DE L'INTÉGRATION
COMMUNAUTAIRE

Hon. Monique M. Smith: Mr. Speaker, I believe we have unanimous consent that up to five minutes be allotted to each party to speak in celebration of Community Living Day.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Agreed? Agreed.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: I rise in the House today in recognition of Community Living Day in the Legislature.

Nous accueillons aujourd'hui des invités de toute la province qui représentent Community Living Ontario.

Welcome to all of you, and thank you for the important work that you do every day. The people you help, as well as the whole developmental services sector, have come a long way because of your vision. You have played a major role in changing the public's attitude toward people with developmental disabilities. By banding together years ago, united by a single dream for a world where everyone is welcome, you formed the basis for what we have now: a system in Ontario that is entirely community-based.

C'est en grande partie à vos efforts qu'il faut attribuer le changement d'attitude du public à l'égard des personnes ayant une déficience intellectuelle.

Community Living Toronto's Lights project is a great example of inclusion and action. This innovative program brings together families, community leaders and the agency to help individuals find long-term housing that meets their needs.

We need more of these partnerships, because each of us, with our unique strengths and abilities, has a role to play. Programs such as Lights reaffirm our commitment to strengthen our communities by including people of all abilities as full members, and that's why our developmental services transformation is working to extend this inclusive vision to everyone with developmental disabilities.

Voilà pourquoi la réorganisation des services pour les personnes ayant une déficience intellectuelle vise à faire en sorte que cette vision de l'inclusion s'applique à toutes les personnes ayant une déficience intellectuelle.

We've made great progress since we first began our transformation, creating the hugely successful Passport program to give adults with developmental disabilities who have left school more options for staying connected to their communities, closing Ontario's last three remaining institutions, bringing in ground-breaking legislation and creating the community network of specialized care for people with high needs.

Come this July, we are moving forward with our vision for a fair, accessible and sustainable developmental services system. This July, we are opening Developmental Services Ontario, the new single window to support for adults with developmental disabilities. People won't have to apply at a number of agencies for service or tell their story over and over. Decisions about eligibil-

ity will be made the same way across the province, and everyone will use the same application. This will mean more fairness and greater transparency for the people we serve.

Our government proudly stands by its record on developmental services. We have come so far together and we need to keep moving forward together.

Nous avons fait tout ce chemin ensemble et nous devons continuer ensemble dans la même voie.

Since 2003, we have increased funding by more than half a billion dollars, and although we are operating on a tight budget again this year, we are still finding ways to help more people. This year we are investing an additional \$40 million in the system, with \$25 million going to people in need of urgent care and \$15 million for special services at home and Passport. Between last year's funding and this new budget commitment, our government has increased funding by \$108 million.

Si l'on combine le financement de l'an dernier au financement prévu dans le nouveau budget, notre gouvernement a accru le financement des services pour les personnes ayant une déficience intellectuelle de 108 millions de dollars.

So to Community Living Ontario and to many more community agencies serving people with a developmental disability around Ontario, I say thank you for your important work and ongoing partnership with us. It will take dedicated people like you to help us take developmental services and social inclusion to the next level and into the future.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I'm pleased to rise today on behalf of our leader, Tim Hudak, and the Progressive Conservative caucus to celebrate Community Living Day at Queen's Park.

I must first start by saying that the work that you do is invaluable. There is no way to quantify the work your 117 local associations do to promote inclusive communities throughout the province. I've had the pleasure of working with and learning from Community Living organizations since I was named the Progressive Conservative caucus critic for community and social services almost four years ago.

I have to thank Community Living for being there during the development of Bill 83, Protecting Vulnerable People Against Picketing Act. There were many individuals who helped me in developing and promoting that bill, and I would like to publicly thank Community Living Ontario's executive director, Keith Powell; policy adviser Gordon Kyle; marketing and communications director Rozalyn Werner-Arcé; and Kory Earle from People First, who were all there and instrumental in ensuring that the message of Bill 83 was heard by all 117 organizations and MPPs.

I also want to thank the organizations, families and individuals who were most affected and wrote me and their individual MPPs in support of Bill 83. Thank you to the over 1,000 people from across the province who have signed petitions asking the government to schedule public hearings on this bill after it passed second reading

last fall. I encourage you to continue the dialogue about Bill 83. I know it is an issue that is important to you and important to Ontario communities.

I've had the opportunity to meet with Community Living Dufferin and Community Living Brampton-Caledon in my riding on many occasions and have seen firsthand the excellent work that you do in our community.

I was reading on Community Living Dufferin's website, "Today, Community Living Dufferin stands by their mission to support, encourage and provide choices for people with disabilities throughout their lives and to pursue enriched, healthy connections within their community." To me, that is what the 117 Community Living organizations are all about: ensuring that individuals with intellectual disabilities feel at home in their communities and have the same opportunities as everyone else.

In their vision statement, Community Living Dufferin envisions a community where all live with respect and dignity.

1530

We have made so many strides to ensure that we promote inclusive communities. The passion for what you do and the people you serve is unmatched. I think we owe a big thank you to you, especially to the front-line staff and volunteers who invest their time to make sure your vision in the community is achieved. I hope that we will continue to see action on behalf of the government.

The Passport program, while a beneficial program, is successful only if people are continuing to apply and get approved—only to wait and languish on waiting lists, which I think is a shameful indication of the needs that we are not providing as a society and as a government.

I want to end on a positive note. I appreciate your support. I appreciate you coming out to Queen's Park and continuing to educate all MPPs. I hope that you continue your valuable work.

Mr. Michael Prue: I'd like to welcome all of the people here from Community Living Ontario. I want to welcome you back to the Legislature, because about a year ago today, I stood in this Legislature and I spoke in sorrow that Community Living Day was cancelled last year. I spoke about the 2007 funding agreement, which unfortunately last year had not been met. But thankfully, to all of you and your hard work, those difficulties are now behind us.

Today, we in the New Democratic Party want to give you a message of hope. We want to work with everyone in this chamber—everyone who is here today to celebrate Community Living—and all sides of this House and all parties and all members in order that we can move forward.

It was quite a few years ago when all parties agreed that we were going to shut down the institutions. Through three separate parties in government and over many years, it happened. I hope that we can get the same kind of commitment from all members of this House today to move forward in other areas we need to do to make sure that everyone, absolutely everyone in this society and in this province, participates to the full level that is allowed to them.

We need to work with everyone so that people with intellectual disabilities who are capable of working—and that is more than 80% of all people—get to keep their wages and not have it clawed back by a government. We need to work so that people get to make their own decisions about their lives and what they want to do and to make sure that others do not make those decisions for them. We need to work and have an Ontario where waiting lists of 23,000 people waiting to get services that they so desperately need are things of the past. We need to work together, where agencies and individuals who work with people with an intellectual disability are properly compensated and never feel they have the need to go out on strike. All these things are possible, and all can be done.

I had an opportunity this morning to meet with people from Community Living. They came to my office. I particularly want to thank Allison, who is up there, because she was incredible in talking about her community of Milton and talking about the hopes and dreams of people with an intellectual disability. She gave me tremendous hope of where this organization is going and how inclusive this organization is. I want to tell you, Allison: Thank you very much, and we commit and I commit to you that over the next few years, as we move forward on this file, members of all sides of this House will find the wherewithal and find the money to build 12,000 homes for people who are today on waiting lists; that we will find the money and find the hope and find the laws to make sure that there are special services at home for 7,000 families who are today on waiting lists. We will do all the things that we can for the 4,000 people waiting for Passport funding to make sure that they get that Passport funding.

It is incumbent upon all of us, whether you are a Conservative or a Liberal or a New Democrat, to do what we can to move this whole file forward. People 20-plus years ago said that there were not going to be institutions anymore. We in this House today have to say that in the next 10 or 15 years, we have to do everything we can so that every single person with an intellectual disability will be a proud member of this society who is able to contribute in their own special way to making Ontario a better place in which to live.

ANNUAL REPORT, INFORMATION AND PRIVACY COMMISSIONER

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I beg to inform the House that today I have laid upon the table the 2010 annual report from the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario, entitled *Be Proactive ... Avoid the Harm*.

ANNUAL REPORT, PROVINCIAL ADVOCATE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I also beg to inform the House that today I have laid upon the table the

2009-10 annual report of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, entitled *We're All in It Together*.

ability to accept the elected position during a regular set election date.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

ENSURING INTEGRITY IN ONTARIO ELECTIONS ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 ASSURANT L'INTÉGRITÉ DES ÉLECTIONS EN ONTARIO

Mr. Bentley moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 196, An Act to amend the Election Act with respect to certain electoral practices / Projet de loi 196, Loi modifiant la Loi électorale en ce qui concerne certaines manœuvres électorales.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The minister for a short statement?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: Defer till ministerial statements.

EDUCATION AND MUNICIPAL AMENDMENT ACT (FILLING VACANCIES), 2011

LOI DE 2011 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR L'ÉDUCATION ET LA LOI SUR LES MUNICIPALITÉS (SIÈGES VACANTS)

Mr. Ouellette moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 197, An Act to amend the Education Act and the Municipal Act, 2001 / Projet de loi 197, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'éducation et la Loi de 2001 sur les municipalités.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member for a short statement?

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette: New section 262.1 of the Municipal Act, 2001, requires every municipality to adopt a policy with respect to filling vacancies that occur within six months after a regular election. The policy must set out whether the municipality is required to fill a vacancy by appointing someone or by requiring that a by-election be held. Section 263 of the act is amended to provide that a municipality must fill vacancies in accordance with its policy. Policies must be in place at least six months before voting day of a regular election.

Essentially, this allows outgoing councils and boards to clearly establish the replacement ground rules for vacancies occurring as a result of someone not having the

NON-PROFIT HOUSING CO-OPERATIVES STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE LES COOPÉRATIVES DE LOGEMENT SANS BUT LUCRATIF

Mrs. Cansfield moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 198, An Act to amend the Co-operative Corporations Act and the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 in respect of non-profit housing co-operatives / Projet de loi 198, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les sociétés coopératives et la Loi de 2006 sur la location à usage d'habitation en ce qui concerne les coopératives de logement sans but lucratif.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

1540

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member for a short statement.

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: Currently, co-ops and their tenants must go before the courts if they cannot resolve their disputes. This often results in costly and lengthy proceedings, and for tenants and landlords dealing with such issues this can mean unnecessary hardship.

Currently, the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006, covers most residential rental units in Ontario, but it excludes co-ops and their tenants. If passed, this bill would enable co-ops and their tenants to access the Landlord and Tenant Board, which will result in a more cost-effective and timely process for all parties.

MOTIONS

HOUSE SITTINGS

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I move that, pursuant to standing order 6(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 9:30 pm on Tuesday, May 17, 2011.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Ms. Smith has moved government notice of motion number 59. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The motion is carried.

Why do you think I remind members all the time that they should be in their seats?

Mr. Peter Kormos: On division.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Carried on division.

Motion agreed to.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

ELECTORAL REFORM RÉFORME ÉLECTORALE

Hon. Christopher Bentley: I'm pleased to rise in the House today on behalf of the McGuinty government to introduce legislation that would, if passed, improve the provincial election process to ensure that the right to vote can be freely exercised without interference or obstacle.

The right to vote is the very foundation of our democracy. The right to vote is each citizen's means to participate in the democratic process. The right to vote is each citizen's voice, and that voice should be heard without interference or impediment.

Les modifications proposées à la Loi électorale renforceront la démocratie de l'Ontario. Elles assureront que l'intégrité du processus électoral est maintenue et protégée.

The proposed amendments to the Election Act would strengthen Ontario's democracy. These amendments would ensure that the integrity of the electoral process is maintained and protected.

According to news reports, Elections Canada received numerous complaints during the federal election. It was alleged that people falsely claiming to be from Elections Canada allegedly called voters in British Columbia, Manitoba and Ontario, and directed them to vote at incorrect stations. These allegations have caused us to take another look at our laws.

While such activity is prohibited by law in other parts of the country, Ontario is at greater risk because we don't have the same legal protection. There are few things that we, either individually or collectively, value and cherish more than our democratic rights. The democratic traditions of our society and of our government have been built upon and continue to depend upon fair and well-run elections in which each person's right to vote can be exercised freely.

Notre gouvernement doit demeurer vigilant afin de préserver et de protéger ce droit. Si cette liberté est menacée, notre gouvernement doit agir rapidement. C'est justement ce que les modifications proposées cherchent à accomplir.

We must be continually vigilant as a government to preserve and foster this right, so when there is a risk that this freedom might be interfered with, we must act quickly as a government. This is what is proposed in these amendments.

Before turning to the proposed amendments, let me provide some context and recount some recent amendments.

In 2007, this House passed legislation introduced by the McGuinty government to modernize provincial elections. At the time, the government took a measured approach that enhanced both access to elections as well as the integrity of elections. In short, the amendments included increasing the number of advance poll days and allowing the Chief Electoral Officer to test new voting methods in by-elections.

In 2010, in response to the recommendations of the Select Committee on Elections, further amendments were passed to make elections fairer, more flexible and more accessible. The Election Statute Law Amendment Act, 2010, included provisions, first, to allow Ontarians to vote by special ballot, to provide the chief electoral officer with the flexibility to design a voting process that is responsive to the needs of voters, and to give voters with disabilities access to voting equipment that would enable them to independently mark a ballot.

Our government has continually made it a priority to modernize the Election Act. In light of recent developments, it is with a great sense of priority and urgency that our government introduces amendments to address the potential risk of limiting Ontarians' right to exercise their vote.

As mentioned earlier, Elections Canada received complaints during the recent federal election from voters who reported that persons falsely claiming to be from Elections Canada directed them to vote at incorrect polling stations, in some cases at a considerable distance from their designated station. The bogus callers allegedly told voters that on account of higher-than-anticipated voter turnout at their designated polling station, they would be required to vote at a different station.

While the Canada Elections Act specifically prohibits any person from wilfully preventing an elector from voting in an election and some other provinces have similar legislation to prohibit such activity, Ontario's Election Act does not include similar prohibitions. That's why our government is proposing to amend the Election Act by adding new provisions.

The first provision would prohibit a person from interfering or attempting to interfere with an elector's exercise of the vote, including those who aid and abet such activity.

The second provision would prohibit a person from impersonating election officials, candidates or their representatives, parties or constituency associations.

These two amendments would address the specific incidents that allegedly occurred during the federal election and would also capture a wide range of spurious election activity and apply to persons inside and outside of Ontario.

As well, each time a person violates any of these new provisions—that is, interferes with a voter's ability to vote or impersonates election officials, the candidate or the representative of the candidate—could constitute an offence. This means that two phone calls telling a voter to go to the wrong polling station could potentially be the subject of two separate charges.

Within the Election Act there are existing sanctions for prohibited election-related activities or “corrupt practices.” These amendments would also be considered “corrupt practices” and attract penalties. In that regard, we are proposing as well to increase these penalties for those who are found guilty of a corrupt practice. The amendment would increase the fine from a maximum of \$5,000 to a maximum of \$25,000, and from a maximum jail term of six months to a maximum term of two years less a day.

Stronger penalties also enable us to bring more meaningful sanctions to this kind of conduct. These amendments, if passed, would be in place for the upcoming provincial election.

In summary, these amendments would further modernize the Election Act and represent our government’s commitment to keep pace with developments and take measures to protect and defend our democratic traditions. These amendments would ensure that Ontarians’ right to vote remains a right that can be exercised freely, and I am sure that members of the House will agree that the exercise of the vote is a fundamental democratic right and one that deserves our immediate attention. I call upon the members of the House to support this bill.

JOURNÉE INTERNATIONALE
CONTRE L’HOMOPHOBIE
INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST
HOMOPHOBIA

L’hon. Leona Dombrowsky: Je prends aujourd’hui la parole devant l’Assemblée pour souligner la Journée internationale contre l’homophobie.

Today is an opportunity to speak up and speak out, to talk to students, teachers, parents and the community, and to make a change by taking action. This is a time for all of us to turn up the volume and make it clear that bullying, harassment and discrimination based on sexual orientation is not acceptable in our schools, our boards or our communities.

Our first commitment to our students’ success and their well-being is the driving force behind everything that we do in education, and everyone who works in education shares that commitment. Every student in our publicly funded education system deserves the opportunity to learn and to reach their full potential in a safe, respectful and inclusive environment.

1550

We believe, and research confirms, that students who feel safe, welcome and respected in their schools are more likely to succeed. A safe, equitable and inclusive education is also central to creating a cohesive society and a strong economy that will secure Ontario’s future prosperity. That is why our government is proud to have taken decisive and real action to support equity, inclusive education and safe schools across Ontario.

Since 2004, we have supported safe school initiatives that create safe and inclusive school environments. For

example, during the first annual bullying prevention week this past November, we announced the Premier’s Safe School Awards, which will recognize exceptional work in fostering a safe and inclusive school environment.

In February 2008, we engaged the safe schools action team to address issues of student-to-student gender-based violence, homophobia, sexual harassment and inappropriate sexual behaviour in schools. The team submitted its report in December 2008. In 2009, we responded to that report’s recommendations and launched one of the most progressive equity and inclusive education strategies in the world. We are working with school boards and stakeholders to build knowledge, understanding and capacity on this very important issue. As a result of this strategy, every school board in this province is now required to have a comprehensive equity and inclusive education policy to support the students in its board.

As part of our strategy, we are focused on providing students with the support they need. A recent EGALE report entitled *Every Class in Every School* reminds us that there is still a lot of work to do to address hostile school climates for sexual and gender minority youth across Canada.

That is why we are committed to providing safer community spaces where students can promote rights for all people and build safer and more accepting school environments. Safer spaces within schools are extremely important for the LGBTQ youth, their peers and allies, because they may be the only place for youth to access authentic peer support without danger or threat of bullying or non-acceptance. Such groups also provide supports for students with LGBTQ parents, other family members and friends.

I’m very proud to report to this House that this strategy has received significant national and international recognition for helping the educational community to identify and remove discriminatory biases and systemic barriers to support student achievement.

The strategy was awarded a highly prestigious and competitive award of excellence in May 2010 from the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, and it most recently received the first-ever excellence in diversity education award from the Canadian Intercultural Dialogue centre.

This recognition confirms what we already know: that Ontario’s diversity is one of the greatest assets we have, that we must ensure that we respect and value our full range of differences, and that we must support success among our diverse student population. I know that everyone in this House agrees on this point.

I want to thank all the committed educators, students, parents and community partners who have provided the assistance and leadership needed to move this strategy forward.

There are schools, school communities and boards across the province that are finding ways to make our schools safe, respectful and welcoming environments for all students.

While we are proud of what we have done, we also recognize there is more to do. To increase achievement and reduce the achievement gaps for all students, and particularly those students who are at risk, we must all work together and actively create the conditions needed for our students to succeed.

I want to thank everyone in the education community for their hard work and their dedication to make Ontario schools safer, more equitable and more inclusive.

NATIONAL PUBLIC WORKS WEEK

SEMAINE NATIONALE DES TRAVAUX PUBLICS

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I rise in the Legislature today to draw our collective attention to the vital public works and infrastructure that support our economy and just about every aspect of our lives.

From the roads, highways and bridges that take Ontario families to and from work safely and transport goods efficiently, to the transit systems that move us within and between our communities, to the schools, colleges and universities where Ontario students learn and grow, to the parks, recreation centres and ice rinks where we pause to play, to the pipes that deliver safe drinking water, and to the broadband Internet towers that connect us to the world, infrastructure supports everything Ontario businesses and families do.

That is why, on behalf of the McGuinty government, it gives me great pleasure to declare this week, May 15 to May 21, 2011, National Public Works Week in Ontario.

Voilà pourquoi, au nom du gouvernement McGuinty, j'ai l'immense plaisir de désigner cette semaine du 15 au 21 mai 2011 la Semaine nationale des travaux publics en Ontario.

I would like to take a moment to thank the thousands of dedicated people who work in this sector. I would like to recognize in the legislative chamber today representatives of the Ontario Public Works Association, including Mr. Sal Iannello from the city of Welland, who is the president-elect of the OPWA, in the public gallery, and Mr. Terry Hardy, executive director, in the west members' gallery, as well as the many other representatives of the Ontario Public Works Association here today. I would like to call on all members here today to join me in acknowledging the fine work of these men and women and those across the sector who help to keep Ontario moving.

En travaillant ensemble, nous avons réussi à améliorer les infrastructures sur l'ensemble de la province : en perfectionnant des milliers de kilomètres de routes et des douzaines de ponts, en construisant et en agrandissant des hôpitaux et des centaines de nouvelles écoles, en réparant ou en remplaçant des réseaux d'aqueduc vieillissants, et en ajoutant des milliers de nouvelles places pour des études dans les collèges et les universités.

Our unprecedented investments have helped people get to where they need to go faster, they've sped up

access to education and health care in communities across Ontario, and they've helped grow our economy. Ontario is turning the corner. Because of investments made to stimulate growth and combat the global economic downturn, today Canada's—and Ontario's—recovery is consistently cited as among the world's best. I'm very proud to say that Ontario has played a critical role in that recovery. Virtually all Canadian political leaders, from Conservatives in Ottawa to Ontario Liberals at Queen's Park, pulled together to invest in infrastructure to help create jobs and secure the recovery, with one notable exception. The leader of the opposition Conservatives not only opposed this investment in the Legislature, but he argued against it. His position was not only irresponsible but, in the face of the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression, downright reckless.

In April, Ontario had an increase of 56,000 jobs, and the unemployment rate declined to 7.9%. That's the lowest unemployment rate since December 2008. The Conference Board of Canada reported that Ontario's infrastructure investments helped to create or protect nearly 225,000 jobs across the province in 2010 alone—jobs for Ontario families.

In fact, Ontario's economy is now turning the corner, and our plan for jobs and growth is working. Working with our federal and municipal partners, we have invested in projects that are creating jobs and benefiting communities across Ontario, projects like the Milton Arts and Cultural Centre, the expanded Wilfrid Laurier University campus in downtown Brantford, a new baseline transitway tunnel in Nepean, and improvements to Fort William stadium in Thunder Bay.

But we're not stopping here. With our 2011 budget, we've continued—even strengthened—our commitment to infrastructure by announcing more than \$35 billion in investments over the next three years.

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Dans notre budget de 2011, nous avons réitéré et même renforcé notre engagement à l'égard des infrastructures en annonçant des investissements de plus de 35 milliards au cours des trois prochaines années.

And it's why we're currently developing a long-term infrastructure plan that will build on our record of success. As we reflect on this record and look ahead, we will explore opportunities for new partnerships and projects across a broad range of sectors and communities.

As we look towards the release of our own 10-year plan later this spring, I'm calling on the federal government to join Ontario and fulfill its commitment to craft a national, long-term capital framework.

Since 2009, the success of the stimulus funding program demonstrates that partnerships among all levels of government have helped Ontario to continue to create local jobs and attract international investment. Addressing our infrastructure challenges demands that we continue to work together.

Parce qu'ensemble, je sais que nous pouvons construire un Ontario qui est plus fort et plus prospère que jamais.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd just remind our guests who visit the chamber today that you're more than welcome to observe the proceedings, but as much as you may like to participate, you can't—that is, unless you are successful on October 6 this fall.

Responses?

INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: I'm pleased to rise on behalf of the Progressive Conservative caucus and our leader, Tim Hudak, to mark the International Day Against Homophobia.

This is an opportunity for us to take a look at how school communities across our province are promoting inclusive, safer learning environments for all our students. We all know that this is absolutely essential if our students are to achieve success.

It's also a very valuable opportunity for us to take a look at the issues that are related to homophobia and raise awareness of those issues, not just with students but also with the wider community and with parents.

One of the issues that has been brought to my attention is the issue of bullying, harassment and discrimination based on sexual orientation, so it's an opportunity for us to speak out and indicate that this is unacceptable, no matter where it takes place in our schools or in our communities.

Today I want to join with my colleague the Minister of Education and thank those who have worked hard to make our schools inclusive and safe places for our students.

NATIONAL PUBLIC WORKS WEEK

Mr. Frank Klees: On behalf of Tim Hudak and the PC caucus, I am pleased to express our support for the proclamation of National Public Works Week in Ontario.

I want to welcome representatives of the Ontario Public Works Association, which represents both public sector and private sector stakeholders in the public works field. I'd like to congratulate its current president, Kealy Dedman, president-elect Sal Iannello, executive director Terry Hardy and the membership of the OPWA and CPWA on this occasion.

Our public works assets contribute significantly to the quality of life we have in this province, and our public works professionals have the responsibility to design, build, operate and maintain these assets. We rely on their expertise, guidance and judgment.

This recognition of National Public Works Week in Ontario is well deserved. The task of managing these assets is complex, and that's why it's important that we consult and collaborate with organizations such as the OPWA.

Identifying and prioritizing public works projects must be technically driven, not politically expedient. That's why the technical and professional expertise of the

OPWA members is so important to the integrity of Ontario's public works infrastructure, and also why it's important that they are recognized as important stakeholders in public policy decision-making.

Today and throughout this National Public Works Week in Ontario, we express our appreciation to the dedicated men and women employed in the many facets of public works and for the contribution they make to Ontario and Canada.

ELECTORAL REFORM

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: Ensuring Integrity in Ontario Elections Act, 2011: It appears that this bill has some merit to it; however, it's what's not in the bill that interests me.

This Thursday, May 9, Ted Arnott, the member for Wellington–Halton Hills, will debate second reading of his Bill 195, An Act to amend the Election Finances Act to ban collusion in electoral advertising. That bill will provide more real integrity than this government bill. It would limit and provide openness in relationships, like the secret relationship between the Working Families and the Liberal Party, a secret deal just like the secret deal with Samsung—which Ontarians don't understand and don't know about; and just like the secret deal that you had with OPSEU, doubling their contract after the next election.

Premier McGuinty has allowed this government to descend into the basement of integrity with secret deals and clandestine relationships, such as the one with the Working Families Coalition.

ELECTORAL REFORM

Mr. Peter Kormos: I'm responding to the Attorney General's ministerial statement that accompanied the introduction of his bill. I suppose I should put this in context. As I recall, in the House leaders' meeting last Wednesday morning—the opposition House leader was there as well—we put to the government House leader the question as to whether or not there were any more government bills coming, and she told us no. Of course, she doesn't lie. She's an honourable person. She told us the truth insofar as she knew it. Well, this is what I find curious, because you talk about secrecy, and clearly the development of legislation over there on that other side is a secret thing as well.

It boggles the mind that here we are, six sitting days left—now, I'd welcome the government presenting a resolution to sit beyond June 2, but here we are, with six sitting days left, and the government House leader is put in a position where she's compromised. And the Attorney General, with much fanfare, introduces legislation that's based on newspaper reports? That's one pathetically poor way to develop policy.

The member for Kenora–Rainy River was the member of the Sorbara Election Act committee, which is really a rubber-stamp process out of the Premier's office. The

Premier did what he wanted and got what he asked for. It forces me to query where these propositions were when the Premier, again with much fanfare—the trumpets were sounding, the legions were pounding their drums—set Sorbara out to conduct his all-encompassing Election Act review. It appeared like something of a swan song for Mr. Sorbara and his career, and yet these considerations were entirely absent.

The government is asking now, I'm sure, for the co-operation of the opposition parties. It's a heck of way to get it. It's not the smoothest move in the world. I'm left with the impression that sometimes these Liberals couldn't organize a drunk-up in a brewery, and today is another illustration of that.

INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA

Mr. Rosario Marchese: New Democrats join the millions of men and women on this International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia.

International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia is an opportunity to celebrate the gains made by gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transsexual and transgendered people in Ontario. It also provides us the opportunity to rededicate our efforts and end the attitudes and stereotypes that lead to direct and indirect discrimination against these communities.

We've come a long way over the past number of years; however, we still have much more to do. Gay and lesbian students in Ontario schools continue to face harassment and violence because of their sexual orientation, and this is unacceptable. Fear should not be part of our curriculum. Student-led organizations like gay-straight alliances can help prevent their abuse. They can help create the supportive environment that leads to success. If the government is serious about inclusion, equality, and the welfare of every student, it must ensure that students are allowed to form GSAs where and when they want to.

Today is also about combating transphobia and ensuring that transsexual and transgendered persons are able to be full citizens in our province. Three times my colleague the MPP for Parkdale–High Park has introduced legislation to amend the Ontario Human Rights Code to recognize gender identity. Each time, the Ontario government has failed to pass this bill. Given the opportunity to explicitly protect transsexual and transgendered people from discrimination, this government has chosen to do nothing.

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Ontario New Democrats believe that society's strength and vibrancy comes from embracing and celebrating our diversity. Today we encourage everyone in the province to join together in our homes, schools, workplaces, and communities and to learn more about homophobia and transphobia. We stand united in our determination to end this discrimination and abuse and to make this province truly welcoming for all Ontarians.

PETITIONS

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Mr. John O'Toole: I'm pleased to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly. It reads as follows:

"Whereas citizens are concerned that contaminants in materials used as fill for pits and quarries may endanger water quality and the natural environment of the greenbelt; and

"Whereas the Ministry of the Environment has a responsibility and a duty to protect the sensitive areas of the greenbelt and provincially sensitive wetlands; and

"Whereas the government of Ontario has the lead responsibility to provide the tools to lower-tier governments to plan, protect and enforce clear, effective policies governing the application and permitting process for the placement of fill in abandoned pits and quarries; and

"Whereas this process requires clarification regarding rules respecting what materials may be used to rehabilitate or fill abandoned pits and quarries;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, ask the Minister of the Environment to initiate a moratorium on the clean fill application and permit process on the greenbelt until there are clear rules; and we further ask that the provincial government take all necessary actions to protect our water and prevent contamination of the greenbelt, specifically at 4148 Regional Highway 2, Newcastle"—often referred to as Morgan's Road—"and Lakeridge Road in Durham."

I'm pleased to sign and support this on behalf of my constituents in the riding of Durham.

SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS

M^{me} France Gélinas: J'ai une pétition de M^{me} Suzanne Rondeau de l'AEFO :

« Attendu que la mission du commissaire aux services en français est de veiller à ce que la population reçoive en français des services de qualité du gouvernement de l'Ontario et de surveiller l'application de la Loi sur les services en français;

« Attendu que le commissaire a le mandat de mener des enquêtes indépendantes selon la Loi sur les services en français;

« Attendu que contrairement au vérificateur général, à l'ombudsman, au commissaire à l'environnement et au commissaire à l'intégrité qui, eux, relèvent de l'Assemblée législative, le commissaire aux services en français relève de la ministre déléguée aux services en français;

Ils demandent à l'Assemblée législative « de changer les pouvoirs du commissaire aux services en français afin qu'il relève directement de l'Assemblée législative. »

J'appuie cette pétition. Je vais demander à Hamza de l'amener à la table des greffiers.

ROAD SAFETY

Mr. Michael A. Brown: I have a petition signed by hundreds of people from across Ontario.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas there currently exists an inequity in penalties under the Highway Traffic Act whereby a driver causing death or grievous harm to another due to unsafe turn or other act may only see a maximum \$500 fine and such is an inadequate penalty,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly to pass into law the Highway Traffic Act amendment, as proposed by the Bikers Rights Organization, which calls for stiffer penalties for drivers involved in fatal accidents where their error caused fatality."

I'm pleased to sign this petition.

PROTECTION FOR PEOPLE
WITH DISABILITIES

Mr. Bill Murdoch: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas supported-living residents in southwestern and eastern Ontario were subjected to picketing outside their homes during labour strikes in 2007 and 2009; and

"Whereas residents and neighbours had to endure megaphones, picket lines, portable bathrooms and shining lights at all hours of the day and night on their streets; and

"Whereas individuals with intellectual disabilities and organizations who support them fought for years to break down barriers and live in inclusive communities; and

"Whereas Bill 83 passed second reading in the Ontario Legislature on October 28, 2010;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Liberal government quickly schedule hearings for Sylvia Jones's Bill 83, the Protecting Vulnerable People Against Picketing Act, to allow for public hearings."

I have signed it.

REPLACEMENT WORKERS

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition from an SEIU retiree from Thunder Bay, and it reads as follows:

"Whereas strikes and lockouts are rare: 97% of collective agreements are settled without a strike or lockout;

"Whereas anti-temporary replacement workers laws have existed in Quebec since 1978; in British Columbia since 1993; and successive governments in those two provinces have never repealed those laws; ...

"Whereas the use of temporary replacement workers during a strike or lockout is damaging to the social fabric of a community in the short and the long term as well as the well-being of its residents;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to enact legislation banning the use of temporary replacement workers during a strike or lockout."

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask page Erica to bring it to the Clerk.

CELLULAR TOWERS

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: I've got a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads as follows:

"Whereas a cellular communications tower is proposed to be built in the vicinity of Third Line and Rebecca Street in Oakville;

"Whereas Industry Canada has ultimate authority to approve the location of cellular communications towers under the federal Radiocommunication Act;

"Whereas the province of Ontario has no jurisdiction in the placement of cell towers;

"Whereas the town of Oakville has very limited jurisdiction in the placement of cell towers; and

"Whereas many area residents and local elected officials have expressed concerns with the proposed location and proximity to residential areas;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the province of Ontario request that the government of Canada grant municipalities the right to have enhanced participation in the placement of cellular communications towers in residential areas; and

"That the province of Ontario request that the government of Canada place a moratorium on the construction of cellular towers within 500 metres of residential homes until the implementation of an improved municipal approval process."

I agree with this, will sign it and send it down with Maggy.

HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas, in March 2007, the McGuinty government announced that the eastward extension of Highway 407 from Brock Road to Highway 35/115 would be completed in 2013;

"Whereas this commitment was contained in a contract between the federal government and the McGuinty government dated March 2, 2007;

"Whereas the McGuinty government has unexpectedly announced that the eastward extension of the 407 will end in Oshawa;

"Whereas ending the 407 in Oshawa will mean added traffic congestion on smaller rural roads in northern Oshawa which are not equipped to handle the volume of traffic entering the highway;

"Whereas ending the 407 in Oshawa will have a significant negative effect on commuters, businesses, tourism, public transit and all the citizens of Durham region;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the McGuinty government honour its commitment and take all necessary steps to complete the 407 eastward extension to Highway 35/115 by 2013, in a single stage, in accordance with the agreement with the federal government."

I affix my name in full support.

OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I've got thousands of men and women who have signed this petition, and it reads:

"Whereas serious systemic problems have continued year after year in nursing homes under the governance of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care; there is no confidence in the ministry to provide effective oversight over nursing homes to ensure all residents are kept safe from harm and receive proper care;

"We, the undersigned Ontarians, therefore request legislative change to grant the Office of the Ombudsman of Ontario to have oversight authority over Ontario nursing homes. Provincial Ombudsmen in other provinces have been granted jurisdiction to directly investigate complaints about substandard care and abuse in nursing homes.

"Ontarians can no longer accept that they are not entitled to have the same representation by the office of the Ontario Ombudsman."

I support this petition strongly and I will sign it.

PHOTO IDENTIFICATION

Mr. Bob Delaney: I have a petition addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly. I'd like to thank Michelle Yumul of Alfred Crescent in Scarborough for having downloaded this from the web and having attached a nice note with it. It read as follows:

"Whereas many seniors, visually impaired persons and other non-drivers do not need or are not eligible for a driver's licence; and

"Whereas many day-to-day transactions such as cashing of cheques; opening a new bank account at a financial institution; returning merchandise to a retail store; boarding a domestic flight; gaining admittance to bars, clubs and casinos; checking in at a hotel; obtaining a credit card, and even renting a video require government-issued photo identification; and

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"Whereas Ontario's Photo Card Act, 2008, sets the legislative framework required to deliver a non-licence photo identification;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the province of Ontario develop a government-issued photo identification card and deliver, in 2011, an Ontario photo card identification for residents of the province over the age of 16 who cannot or choose not to drive."

I have affixed my signature in support of this petition, and I'm going to ask page Jonah to carry it for me.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS TREATMENT

Mr. Steve Clark: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas thousands of people suffer from multiple sclerosis;

"Whereas there is a treatment for chronic cerebrospinal venous insufficiency, more commonly called CCSVI, which consists of a corrective angioplasty, a well-known and universally practised procedure that is low-risk and at relatively low expense;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Minister of Health agrees to proceed with clinical trials of the venoplasty treatment to fully explore its potential to bring relief to the thousands of Ontarians afflicted with multiple sclerosis."

I agree with the petition. I'll affix my signature and send it to the table with page Amira.

DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition from the people of Sudbury.

"Whereas the Ontario government is making ... PET scanning a publicly insured health service available to cancer and cardiac patients" under certain conditions; and

"Whereas," since October 2009, "insured PET scans" are being performed "in Ottawa, London, Toronto, Hamilton and Thunder Bay; and

"Whereas the city of Greater Sudbury is a hub for health care in northeastern Ontario, with the Sudbury Regional Hospital, its regional cancer program and the Northern Ontario School of Medicine;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to make PET scans available through the Sudbury Regional Hospital, thereby serving and providing equitable access to the" people of northeastern Ontario.

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask page Lukian to bring it to the Clerk.

ROAD SAFETY

Mr. Jeff Leal: I have a petition today from Dianna Baskerville, who lives in Blind River, Ontario.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas there currently exists an inequity in penalties under the Highway Traffic Act whereby a driver causing death or grievous harm to another due to unsafe turn or other act may only see a maximum \$500 fine, and such is an inadequate penalty;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly to pass into law the Highway Traffic Act amendment as proposed by the Bikers Rights Organization, which

calls for stiffer penalties for drivers involved in fatal accidents where their error caused fatality.”

I agree with this, and I will give it to page Benjamin.

WIND TURBINES

Mr. Toby Barrett: We’ve now got over 2,000 signatures on petitions.

“Whereas industrial wind turbine developments have raised concerns among citizens over health, safety and property values;

“Whereas the Green Energy Act allows wind turbine developments to bypass meaningful public input and municipal approvals;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Revise the Green Energy Act to allow full public input and municipal approvals on all industrial wind farm developments and that a moratorium on wind development be declared until an independent epidemiological study is completed into the health and environmental impacts of industrial wind turbines.”

I’ve signed the petition.

OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have a petition from the people of Hanmer.

“Whereas the Ontario Ombudsman, who is an officer of the Legislature, is not allowed to provide trusted, independent investigations of complaints in the areas of hospitals, long-term-care homes, school boards, children’s aid societies and retirement homes; and

“Whereas Ontario is the only province in Canada not allowing their Ombudsman to investigate any of these areas; and

“Whereas people wronged by these institutions are left feeling helpless and most have nowhere else to turn for help to correct systemic issues;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Grant the Ombudsman the power to investigate hospitals, long-term-care homes, school boards, children’s aid societies and retirement homes.”

I support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask page John to bring it to the Clerk.

ROAD SAFETY

Mr. Michael A. Brown: I have another petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas there currently exists an inequity in penalties under the Highway Traffic Act whereby a driver causing death or grievous harm to another due to unsafe turn or other act may only see a maximum \$500 fine, and such is an inadequate penalty;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly to pass into law the Highway Traffic Act amendment as proposed by the Bikers Rights Organization, which

calls for stiffer penalties for drivers involved in fatal accidents where their error caused fatality.”

I will sign this petition and give it to page Maggy.

MATTHEWS HOUSE HOSPICE

Mr. Jim Wilson: I want to thank the 792 people who signed this petition.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the number of clients served by Matthews House ... has doubled in less than three years, while funding provided by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care through Central LHIN remains substantially unchanged; and

“Whereas Matthews House Hospice is the lowest-funded hospice in Central LHIN and among the lowest-funded in the province, serving as many clients or more than others receiving substantially more money; and

“Whereas ... in February 2010, Matthews House ... was promised a short-term and a long-term solution to its underfunding by Central LHIN and that the long-term solution has not materialized; and

“Whereas, in January, Matthews House ... was told by the Central LHIN that any adjustment would have to come from the ministry, while two months later the ministry informed Matthews House ... that it would have to work with Central LHIN to solve its funding issues;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That Premier McGuinty instruct the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care to appoint someone with authority to meet with the board representatives of Matthews House Hospice to” sort out “how they can get a just resolution for the people of south Simcoe needing hospice care, a resolution that ensures that their promise of a long-term solution is kept, giving them base funding equal to that of other hospices in Central LHIN.”

I agree with this petition and I will sign it.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUPPORTING SMOKE-FREE ONTARIO BY REDUCING CONTRABAND TOBACCO ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 APPUYANT LA STRATÉGIE ONTARIO SANS FUMÉE PAR LA RÉDUCTION DU TABAC DE CONTREBANDE

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 11, 2011, on the motion for second reading of Bill 186, An Act to amend the Tobacco Tax Act/ Projet de loi 186, Loi modifiant la Loi de la taxe sur le tabac.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Pursuant to the order of the House earlier today, I’m now required to put the question. On May 11, 2011, Ms. Aggelonitis moved

second reading of Bill 186, An Act to amend the Tobacco Tax Act. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will say "aye."

Those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

Pursuant to standing order 28(h), the chief government whip has requested that the vote on Bill 186 be deferred until deferred votes tomorrow.

Second reading vote deferred.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY
STATUTE LAW
AMENDMENT ACT, 2011
LOI DE 2011 MODIFIANT DES LOIS
EN CE QUI CONCERNE LA SANTÉ
ET LA SÉCURITÉ AU TRAVAIL

Mr. Sousa moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 160, An Act to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 with respect to occupational health and safety and other matters / *Projet de loi 160, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé et la sécurité au travail et la Loi de 1997 sur la sécurité professionnelle et l'assurance contre les accidents du travail en ce qui concerne la santé et la sécurité au travail et d'autres questions.*

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Debate?

Hon. Charles Sousa: I am pleased to rise for the third reading of the Occupational Health and Safety Statute Law Amendment Act, 2011, Bill 160. I will be sharing my time with the MPP from Scarborough Southwest, the PA to the Minister of Labour.

This bill is about moving forward to protect the health and safety of working people in the province of Ontario. New amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997, represent the largest overhaul of the province's safety system in 30 years.

The bill itself is a product of a spirit of co-operation and a shared vision of safer workplaces. We are proposing a road map forward for the future so that this province's working people have a future free of injury and occupational disease. The road ahead will be one that we'll build together with our health and safety partners. This has been demonstrated in the co-operation and hard work by all parties that went into this proposed legislation and that helped refine it. Our discussions with stakeholders and consultants, conducted by the expert advisory panel, have created what we think is good legislation: a bill we can all be proud of; a bill that can save the lives of many.

It is our hope that all parties will support this proposed legislation. This bill is the product of teamwork between employers, unions, and health and safety experts. This enabling legislation is a key step in implementing the expert panel's recommendations, and we look forward to

working together with our stakeholders to achieve continued progress and success.

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On December 16, 2010, the expert advisory panel led by Tony Dean delivered its final report. The final recommendations of this expert advisory panel struck a balance between two key factors: a need to provide better protection and support for workers, especially young and new workers and recent immigrants, and the need to improve the way we reach out to and help the business community, particularly small businesses, to help them comply with our health and safety laws.

Our government has accepted the panel's recommendations. I would again like to thank and show our appreciation for the hard and dedicated work of the members of that panel and what they accomplished. Just as importantly, these representatives of workers, business, and health and safety experts reached their recommendations by consensus, because it is only through consensus, not division, that we will move forward.

Today, I would also like to take a moment to talk about the members of a body the expert panel recommended be formed, and that is the interim prevention council. This interim council has begun the work of helping to implement the key recommendations of the Expert Advisory Panel on Occupational Health and Safety, including the recruitment of a chief prevention officer. The interim council is led by interim chair Paavo Kivistö, who is a retired Deputy Minister of the Environment and a former Deputy Minister of Labour. The interim prevention council includes Joan Eakin, professor at Dalla Lana School of Public Health; Vernon Edwards, health and safety director at the Ontario Federation of Labour; John A. Macnamara, vice-president, health, safety and environment, Hydro One; Domenic Mattina, vice-president of sales and estimating at Mattina Mechanical Ltd.; and Carmine Tiano, director of WSIB advocacy and occupational services, Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario. I could not be more pleased with the expertise and commitment these people are bringing to the interim prevention council. Their input has been invaluable, and I sincerely thank them for that.

There have been many more individuals from stakeholder organizations who provided invaluable and valuable insight to the panel, and to these people I say thank you.

I would also like to recognize the hard work that the Ministry of Labour staff have put into bringing this legislation forward.

It is important to remember that the expert advisory panel received more than 400 responses and submissions during consultations, and conducted more than 50 meetings with stakeholders. There will be more opportunities for consultations and input as we continue to work closely with the stakeholders to implement the recommendations of the expert panel.

Since this government assumed office in 2003, Ontario's annual rate of workplace injuries has dropped

substantially: about 30%. We have worked hard to make working Ontarians safer, but there is much more to do, and that is why we are taking action. We believe our proposed legislation, if passed, will save lives and prevent injuries as we move forward.

Under our proposed amendments, the Ministry of Labour would assume responsibility for the prevention of workplace injuries and occupational disease. This will help coordinate, align and strengthen all occupational health and safety activities, including prevention and enforcement activities. A new chief prevention officer reporting to the Minister of Labour on strategic priorities would provide day-to-day leadership on the prevention of workplace injury and occupational disease. This change will provide new leadership and focus in preventing workplace death and injury. The Ministry of Labour would expand its involvement in workplace health and safety education and promotion, and the Minister of Labour would have oversight of the province's health and safety associations, again better aligning and coordinating prevention activities.

A new permanent prevention council with representatives from the labour and employer communities, as well as other health and safety experts, would provide valuable input in the direction the health and safety system takes with respect to preventing occupational injury and disease. This new permanent prevention council would keep our stakeholder communities engaged and in touch as we move ahead.

The chief prevention officer would have the authority to establish standards for health and safety training in order to enhance this training and ensure workers are properly trained.

Workers, especially the most vulnerable, would have improved protections against reprisals for exercising their rights under the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

This proposed legislation would provide a framework to improve the system of health and safety for Ontario's workplaces. The major components of these proposed amendments would, if passed, come into effect on or before April 1, 2012.

Our proposed legislation would better facilitate the approval of codes of practice which, when they are in place, could provide assistance to employers, especially small business, and guide them in complying with health and safety laws.

Again, let me assure all that we will continue to consult on the implementation of these changes as we move forward.

The expert panel heard from stakeholders who said they wanted to better coordinate and align the province's health and safety prevention activities, and we listened. So the structural changes proposed in our bill would improve the integration of prevention programs and be led by a chief prevention officer accountable to the minister. This is a change that we believe would strengthen and better align our health and safety efforts to the benefit of all.

The mandate and accountability for prevention under our bill would be transferred from the Workplace Safety

and Insurance Board to the Ontario Ministry of Labour. This will not only better coordinate and align our efforts, but we believe it will enhance accountability and transparency and offer greater opportunities for stakeholder engagement.

If the prevention function is assumed by the Ministry of Labour, this would mean that funding would come under the same review and approvals processes of all provincial government expenditures. For example, the minister would have to seek approval from treasury board and cabinet for prevention-related expenditures. Such spending would also be subject to public scrutiny through the estimates and public accounts processes and publications.

Finally, under this bill, the minister is required to publish the chief prevention officer's annual report.

All of these new requirements will support and, in fact, improve transparency. So in addition to helping to make workplaces safer and healthier, the new structure would be more accessible to both workers and employers and accountable to them and to the public.

Our bill provides that the Minister of Labour has oversight of the province's health and safety associations. Our health and safety associations provide a great deal of assistance to our workers and employers. Our changes would mean that the health and safety system is working together effectively and efficiently in a new integrated system, and this was another key recommendation of the expert panel. Stakeholders asked for enhanced coordination and alignment between the activities of the health and safety agencies, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board and the Ministry of Labour's enforcement and policy priorities.

Under our bill, the chief prevention officer would be responsible for establishing a provincial occupational health and safety strategy. The CPO, the chief prevention officer, would ensure that this overall provincial health and safety strategy is aligned across all system partners. The chief prevention officer proposed in our legislation would directly report to, and provide an annual report for, the Minister of Labour on the statutory mandate.

It's important to stress that the new model contained in our bill would be fiscally neutral to the government and would not add to the employer's WSIB premiums. Health and safety associations would be funded through government transfer payments and work under the direction of the chief prevention officer. The revenue that the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board currently spends on prevention would instead be allocated to the Ministry of Labour for the new prevention organization.

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Under our bill, a new prevention council consisting of both employer and worker representatives would be an important partner in working closely and providing advice to the CPO. This, again, was a key recommendation of the expert panel report. The prevention council would also advise the minister on the appointment of the new chief prevention officer and advise the CPO on the occupational health and safety strategy. As the CPO

contemplates significant new changes to the health and safety system, the prevention council chair would be asked to tell the minister whether the council endorses that direction of change.

A key recommendation of the expert panel's report calls for increased health and safety training for our province's workers, especially in high-risk occupations. The consultations held by the expert panel showed us that many workers are not aware of their basic rights and responsibilities under the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Our amendments would empower the chief prevention officer to approve health and safety training standards for programs and providers.

We are proposing that all health and safety representatives in workplaces with six to 19 employees be trained to carry out their health and safety duties. They currently do not require any training. The expert advisory panel felt that this caused higher risk in small workplaces. These provisions would come into force on a date yet to be determined to allow for sufficient time to develop the training standards and, more importantly, to consult with both business and labour on its effective implementation and to make sure we achieve the best results for the money spent.

Vulnerable workers and anti-reprisal legislation: That's another provision in the bill. It deals with workplace reprisals. The expert advisory panel concluded that when non-unionized workers are fired or otherwise punished by an employer for exercising their rights under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, there is no quick mechanism for these workers to obtain timely redress. Therefore, under our proposed amendments, health and safety inspectors would be given the power to refer such matters to the OLRB in certain circumstances if the worker agrees. In addition, we are proposing in this bill that explicit authority be given to expedite reprisal hearings. The panel has also recommended that the offices of the worker and employer adviser could in the future provide support to both non-unionized workers and small employers in reprisal cases. The proposed amendments include a regulation-making authority to allow for this.

This brings me now to the vulnerable workers' section 21 committee. In addition to the proposed amendments, we will be setting up a section 21 committee for vulnerable workers. This will help assure that the key stakeholders who represent the workplace parties can give needed input and advice on reaching out to and protecting those workers who are often at the greatest risk in the workplace.

Then there's young workers—secondary and post-secondary education. The expert panel has recommended—and we will be moving forward with—new and enhanced efforts to reach out to young workers. We will be developing new materials and programs to help assure that teens entering the workforce know their rights and their responsibilities under the Occupational Health and Safety Act. We owe it to our young people, our children, to give them the knowledge and the tools to keep themselves safe as they enter the workforce.

The expert panel also recommended strengthening the foundation of our occupational health and safety efforts and strengthening the internal responsibility system. The expert panel cited the key role that internal responsibility plays because, in the words of the report, "Ministry of Labour inspectors cannot be in all workplaces at all times."

The workplace parties need to take responsibility for health and safety hazards to the extent that they can control them. The anti-reprisal provisions of our legislation, as well as the supports for small business, will strengthen the internal responsibility system.

And as part of our support to small business, there will be a new section 21 committee to address the needs of small business.

Our ongoing discussions with stakeholders have further strengthened this bill and demonstrated a spirit of co-operation. There were a number of government amendments. The valuable input of these stakeholders and of the interim prevention council have led to us propose the changes to the bill that were made by the Standing Committee on Social Policy, and they are as follows:

One was to expand the responsibilities and powers of the chief prevention officer by assigning him or her a number of powers and duties that would have been assigned to the minister. This would include training and certification powers, and the monitoring of designated entities.

Another was to add a requirement that the minister would consult with the chief prevention officer on any significant proposed changes to the funding and delivery of the prevention services.

Another was to stipulate that the prevention council would be comprised of equal numbers of labour and employer representatives, as well as allowing for representation from non-unionized workers, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, and the health and safety experts.

Another was to remove the provision of the bill that would allow a director to establish policies related to the Occupational Health and Safety Act and require inspectors to follow those policies. This provision was previously proposed to ensure increased consistency in the interpretation, administration and enforcement of OHSA. The government has since found other instruments, however, to meet the intent of this provision.

We also put in an amendment to reduce the administrative burden on a joint health and safety committee co-chair at a workplace when bringing forward recommendations to the employer.

We amended the training provision to clarify that the CPO may approve a training program that is established before or after training standards are established.

Another was to remove the provisions that prohibit inspectors from testifying at the Ontario Labour Relations Board regarding a reprisal against a worker under the Ontario Health and Safety Act.

In conclusion, we have listened to the expert advisory panel, with its representation from workers, employers,

and various health and safety experts. We have carefully considered the recommendations of the panel, recommendations based on broad consultations with workplace parties and representatives. We have accepted the recommendations of the expert panel, and I thank all those who have worked so hard on the panel's report. We are acting by bringing forward this proposed legislation. This proposed legislation is a key step in that recommendation.

Our government believes that by working together, we can continue to foster workplaces that are healthy, that are safe, that are harmonious, and by so doing, also help build our strong economy. We believe our bill, over time, can and will save lives and prevent injury among working Ontarians. The citizens of this province deserve no less.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member for Scarborough Southwest.

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti: I'm pleased to rise, along with the Minister of Labour, to address third reading of the Occupational Health and Safety Statute Law Amendment Act, 2011. This legislation is about our hope for and our commitment to safer and healthier Ontario workplaces.

The bill we have before us today has been about working together, all of us—employees and employers, health and safety stakeholders and experts, and the government that represents them. It is about working better, and that means better aligning and coordinating our health and safety system and our efforts and resources.

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That is the true spirit of the Dean report. The expert panel reached out to and included input from both key stakeholders and the public. The panel listened, and we listened.

In our proposed legislation, we're embarking on a major change in our province's occupational health and safety system, the biggest since the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act was adopted over 30 years ago. We're moving ahead to develop new partnerships, new tools and a new structure that will better serve the needs of our people, a structure that is more responsive, effective and efficient, a structure that will promote a culture of health and safety in Ontario workplaces.

At the end of the day, and certainly for the end of our citizens' workday, the goal is, and must be, workplaces that are safe and healthy. Our proposals are a road map forward to ensure we are providing a more promising future for working men and women.

As I've mentioned before in this House, this bill is not an end point but a beginning. Our proposed changes would create a framework for to us to build on together.

Many of the panel's recommendations will be phased in over time to allow for further consultation on detailed proposals. We want to ensure that the workplace parties have an opportunity to become familiar with and prepared for new duties and responsibilities that will be required.

The implementation of the panel's recommendations require not only legislative changes, but also the develop-

ment of new operational policies and new procedures. This work will go forward in consultation with the interim prevention council, prevention system partners and stakeholders. This bill is a foundation for what will be a work in, and work for, progress for workplace safety.

I want to take a few minutes of my time to discuss the bill that we have before us and where we see it fitting in our provincial strategy on occupational health and safety.

Our bill would enable us to build a more integrated health and safety system, a system where our prevention goals are more closely aligned with policy and enforcement efforts, a prevention system that is more accountable and transparent to the people it exists to serve.

Also critical to our new system will be training and protection for workers who use that training and exercise their rights under the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

That is why we accepted and are proposing to move forward with new mandatory basic health and safety training for workers and supervisors. This training is necessary for our internal responsibility system to work, and our internal responsibility system is key in making our overall prevention system work.

We have said that Ministry of Labour inspectors cannot be in all the province's workplaces at all times. That is why we depend on the workplace parties working together in an informed environment and constructively working toward the common goal of increased health and safety.

I want to spend a few moments to talk about key aspects of this bill. Firstly, the chief prevention officer: We talk about a transfer of responsibilities from the WSIB to the Ministry of Labour, creating a better coordinated prevention system. Our bill would require the minister to appoint a chief prevention officer who will be required to consult with the prevention council and consider its advice in developing the provincial strategy and the annual report.

Throughout our proposed changes, there is a lot of provision for accountability and transparency. This is what stakeholders told the expert panel they wanted, and this is what our bill provides.

Secondly, I want to say a few words about the prevention council. There would also be the creation and operation of a new multi-stakeholder prevention council. Council members would be appointed by the minister and would include representatives of workers and employers, as well as experts in occupational health and safety.

Thirdly, I want to say a few words about worker health and safety representatives. Our bill, under section 6, would add a new requirement for employers and constructors to ensure that the health and safety representative is trained to effectively perform the duties of a representative. The chief prevention officer, along with the minister, could set standards for such training.

Fourthly, the co-chair of the joint health and safety committee: Under section 7 of the bill, there are provisions that would enable either co-chair of the joint health

and safety committee to make written recommendations to the employer if the committee has failed to agree on a recommendation.

The Ministry of Labour has appointed an interim prevention council made up of five members of the expert advisory panel and an interim chair. This council has already been advising the minister on recommendations. The chief prevention officer is expected to be appointed in the upcoming weeks.

I've outlined some key provisions of our bill and the road forward, but for a moment I'll talk about what the Ministry of Labour has done and accomplished during our time in government. This bill will be building on a strong foundation, a foundation that we have been building since 2003. The Ministry of Labour now has more than 400 highly trained ministry health and safety professionals supporting enforcement every day. I know I've used some time in this Legislature to share some of these numbers before; however, I think they serve a role in emphasizing just how far we have come. The lost-time injury rate in Ontario has decreased by more than 30% since 2003. That's a reduction of more than 25,000 injuries, and that means that, just last year alone, our inspectors conducted over 62,000 field visits. Of all these field visits, more than 41,000 were proactive. Within the same time period, over 30,000 workplaces were visited across the province. During these visits, health and safety inspectors issued over 98,000 orders. That's progress. We've got inspectors out on job sites every day.

But more needs to be done, and more will be done. The expert panel was a true example of workplace parties and representatives of labour and business working together. Only through co-operation and working together can we achieve our goal. I must say, throughout the entire legislative process—and, indeed, the final product that we are debating this afternoon is a product of working together.

Let us continue in this spirit of co-operation. Let us move forward towards the common goal of safeguarding Ontario's workers. I know we all share that goal in this Legislature, and so this bill should be one that we all support.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Comments and questions?

Mr. Toby Barrett: A few comments on Bill 160: We know it's making some changes to the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act. Both the Minister of Labour and the member for Scarborough Southwest did make mention of prevention—very important.

For a number of years I have served on a farm safety association. I was president of the Norfolk Farm Safety Association connected with the provincial body. I see here it's removing prevention activities from the mandate of the WSIB. It's uploading it to the Ministry of Labour, with the creation of a provincial council and a chief prevention officer within the Ministry of Labour. The benefit of the doubt—I'm assuming that's a good thing, an important thing where the chief prevention officer

takes control over all occupational and health safety initiatives within the government.

Again, I do want to stress the importance of prevention in this business. I think of, when I was president of the Norfolk Farm Safety Association, attending one of the conferences. We heard a story from a farmer up Huron–Bruce way. His name was Ken Kelly, as I recall. Tough times in farming; this was a number of years ago. He had to lay off his hired man. He was working day and night, in bad weather. Regrettably, he got his hand caught in a PTO. He was a large man. The bulk of the weight of his body stopped the PTO. What is this, 540 RPM? And he told us: If you thought you had problems before you had an accident like this, you have no idea of the kinds of problems that you have afterwards.

1700

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further comments and questions?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I've got say, there were some positive things—there still are some very positive things—about Bill 160. One of the positives that we alluded to or made reference to on second reading was the fact that this bill eliminates much of the fragmentation that has existed for a long time, where the Ministry of Labour and the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board were doing very much the same thing and were duplicating a whole lot of things that didn't seem to make much sense. Eliminating some of that fragmentation has been a very good thing.

We stated that we had a lot of concerns in second reading. We said that we needed hearings to find out what others had to say. We hoped, based on the concerns that New Democrats had raised in second reading, that there would be amendments to the bill. To be fair, and God bless, an election coming in October has helped, I'm sure, because when you're very close to an election and you're worried about what your labour friends might say, making a couple of amendments wasn't such a bad idea. So I congratulate the Minister of Labour and his team and the committee for accepting some of our amendments and for introducing some of your own. This is okay. It's okay to admit that you did that, because you don't do that very often in committee. So I want to say that that was good.

There's more to be done, we argue, around the enforcement side of things. It's something that we are very concerned about, because we say that the most effective incentive for employers to improve health and safety is a strong enforcement system based on the principle that the cost of violating the law is greater than the cost of compliance. This is something we need to work on. We can do a lot better. There will be time, of course, in the next session to think about those things, but on the whole, we made some—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. The member for Northumberland–Quinte West.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: Let me say from the outset that I'd like to congratulate my colleague the Minister of Labour and his PA, the member from Scarborough Southwest, on the hard work they did to put this together.

It's interesting that the member from Trinity-Spadina made some comments about how fragmented the legislation was that was out there before. As we deal with labour issues in our constituency offices, I must say that sometimes as we try to help our constituents navigate through any process—and this is one of them—whether it's WSIB or some labour issues, even our staff sometimes gets bogged down. So any time that we can do something easier for who I will call Mr. and Mrs. Public—who are not entrenched in this every day, but there comes a time when they have to try to navigate through any system. Any time that we can make it more user-friendly—because, in many cases, those folks who are trying to navigate through this are not under the best of circumstances, normally because there's some challenge that they're facing, whether it's—well, obviously, it's labour-related. There is always a certain amount of anxiety, so any time that we can smooth out the process is great. So congratulations for coming this far.

We have to do more. There's always room for improvements, because I'm not sure anybody could ever reach perfection.

I just want to make a comment. The interesting part about this is that the legislation went through its due course of second reading at committee, and there have been a number of amendments that people brought forward, and members in the opposition as well, so it's been a really collaborative effort. At the end of the day, leaving the partisan stuff aside, it's the people we represent who are going to be the benefactors. So I—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. Further comments and questions?

Mr. Peter Kormos: I'm looking forward to the lead by the critic from the official opposition—the lead response, the lead speech from the member for Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington. Our critic for this matter, the member for Hamilton East-Stoney Creek, will be making his lead on the next occasion that the bill is called.

I want to tell you, we don't expect to call a large number of speakers on this particular issue. Here we are at third reading. I'm impressed at the fact that both the minister and the parliamentary assistant are here in the chamber.

It's inappropriate to mention people's absences but it's entirely appropriate to mention their presence because they're recognizing and abiding by a long-time and honourable tradition of watching their bill, monitoring their bill, as it progresses through, in this case, third reading debate. I commend them for that.

I also was incredibly impressed with, as the member just said, the level of collaboration. If only that could occur more frequently around here, a whole lot more progress would be made in a far more progressive way. Indeed, New Democrats made numerous suggestions. We were pleased to see the positive response to many of them. There were concerns raised by the constituencies that are impacted, that are affected. The government made some attempt to address those. I recognize that.

I also say this to you: The critical issue around occupational health and safety is the right of workers to organize into trade unions and to collectively bargain. If we're going to create truly safe workplaces, we want unionized workplaces. If we're going to have unionized workplaces and safe workplaces, we have to give agricultural workers the right to join a union and collectively bargain. Anything less is an affront to those hard-working women and men in the most dangerous workplaces in our province and country.

Secondly, we've got to extend card-based certification to every worker in this province—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The minister has the opportunity to respond.

Hon. Charles Sousa: I also would like to congratulate and thank all members who have spoken to this bill over the number of weeks that we've been deliberating over this issue. Thank you to the member from Scarborough Southwest for his outstanding work. I appreciate the comments from the members from Haldimand-Norfolk and Trinity-Spadina. I appreciate the words from the member from Northumberland about consensus and co-operation. Of course, the member from Welland very articulately and very appropriately reinforced the fact that this was a consensus, a matter of co-operation.

What we are dealing with here is the livelihood of our workers. What we have done from the outset, in keeping with the spirit of Tony Dean and the expert panel, is to work collaboratively for the benefit of those workers. It's not about partisan politics. It's not about an election year. It's about the ongoing safety of individuals who are out in the workplace in future years to come.

It seemed appropriate for us to have that collaborative nature continue. It's one of the reasons why I respect the critics from both sides of the House in deliberating over these issues. That's why we took advantage of the primary recommendation of the expert panel to have an interim prevention council, so that we can work collaboratively during the development of legislation. A number of concerns were raised, a number of them were acted upon, and I appreciate the input to enable some of those amendments to be brought forward. It's one of the reasons we made it public well ahead of the committee, so that all people could deliberate over what we were recommending and proposing, in keeping with the concerns of the opposition as well.

I congratulate every member in the House. I congratulate my critics for their work on this as well. I congratulate everyone for collaborating and working cooperatively.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Randy Hillier: First off, I want to offer up our support—but it is cautious support—for this bill. I want to congratulate and commend the minister on the whole process on this bill so far, something that we and I have not seen. Well, I'll say I have not seen that sort of collaboration on any other bill yet in my few years here at the House.

Now, there were amendments offered up. There was clearly a willingness to listen to interested parties and take into consideration their justifiable concerns. That is a plus. I do want to mention this, though: As has been mentioned by a number of speakers so far, they refer to the present system as fragmented. That is indeed one way you could describe the present system; it's fragmented. You might also refer to it as dispersed and decentralized. With this bill—and this is why I offer up cautious support on this—we are now going to put that dispersed and decentralized system into the hands of a single chief prevention officer.

1710

Just to give some clarify for those people who may not realize it, at the present time we have about 20 different occupational health and safety agencies or associations that provide training and workplace safety information, and they're based on industries. The member from Haldimand-Norfolk talked about his time with the Farm Safety Association. Myself, as a construction electrician, I was involved with the Construction Safety Association.

But each industry is very unique, and the safety mechanisms and safety training required are unique to each industry and often to each workplace. Clearly, safety in a restaurant is something significantly different from a construction electrician, even a construction electrician as compared to a high-voltage electrician. There's very unique safety mechanisms and training required.

The fragmentation that has been referred to has been referred to as a negative. There are some very powerful and substantial benefits from having that dispersed system that we did have.

So we're going to move this into a single person with an advisory body, right at the present time the interim prevention council and the chief prevention officer. Of course, there's no way one individual or even a small group of individuals are going to be able to develop substantive, practical, workable safety and training programs for such a diverse economy that we have in this province. I want to make this House aware of that concern. That concern I think is going to be important for the minister down the road as this bill travels through and as it gets implemented, that whoever the minister is keep a good eye on how that is turning out because there are, indeed, some difficulties that my arise out of that.

I also want to talk about—we know that one of the main triggers of this bill was that tragic Christmas death of four people on a scaffold. It was clear from the investigation into that tragedy that the present legislation and the present regulations were not being followed. It was clear that there was an element of the underground economy at play here that contributed substantially to that tragedy. I think that's an important element that has been disregarded in this bill.

Most employers in this province, I think everybody in this House will agree, the far, far greatest number of employers, are very cognizant of and very interested in having a safe workplace. I've worked for many employers in my career and I've yet to ever work for

somebody who was dismissive of or had a disregard for workplace safety. But there is a very small group out there who may be dismissive of and disregard workplace safety. There are those who engage in the underground economy, as we like to call it.

I'd like the government side to reflect a little bit on why that underground economy works, why it's there, and if you're not doing things that are contributing to a growth in that underground economy. The Dean panel clearly focused and mentioned the underground economy, but we don't see much on it in this bill.

We do know that what grows the underground economy is the cost of doing business. If the legitimate cost of doing business increases or goes out of skew, if it becomes more profitable to be illegitimate than to be legitimate, and things like increasing taxation are contributors to the underground economy: things like the HST, things like increasing WSIB rates. Those costs on legitimate contractors, if they get too high, actually create an incentive to go to the underground. We've all seen it and we all recognize it, whether it's skyrocketing tobacco rates—that creates a black market for contraband tobacco. The cost of doing business legitimately, if it gets too high, creates that incentive to go underground.

That element, I found, was not really addressed within this bill, and I think we see some competing and contradicting ministries at play here. We certainly know the intention of the minister on this one is to improve health and safety in this province, but at the same time, other ministries increasing the cost of doing business legitimately can be conflicting and competing with the minister's interest.

I think it's also clear that the Dean panel report explicitly stated that this should be cost-neutral, that there should be no additional costs employed or imposed on industry. Again, I think we understand one of the reasons for that. He understands that underground economy and doesn't want to further burden legitimate employers, but we don't have a good handle on the cost of this bill. Of course, much of this bill is going to be left to regulations, which we in this House won't see or be able to review, but is this bill going to be cost-neutral for our employers? Are we going to find those efficiencies and hopefully not create those incentives in the marketplace for people to expand the underground economy?

The other thing is—and I understand the difficulty here—in legislation we're taking a piece of legal framework and trying to illustrate what that's going to look like in practice. It's very difficult. How do we demonstrate in a piece of legislation what a construction site is going to look like, or a restaurant or whatever the industry is going to be.

The bill is pretty light on training. There is one line item in it about training. The Dean panel report focused significantly on training. There's widespread agreement that there is a need for training, but what that training is going to be and what it is going to cost, we have no idea about that with this bill. It would be nice—I think it would be a powerful statement by the minister—if, when

the regulations were developed for this, he forwarded them to a standing committee of the House for stakeholder review. I think that would demonstrate a very powerful commitment that the minister is interested in making sure that industry is being heard and that their wishes are being seen.

1720

As I've said, this is the first time that I've seen it. I've seen so many other cases, so many other examples where stakeholders have been heard but their concerns not addressed. For example, this week—significant opposition from industry on Bill 151.

The other thing is that I would like to see, and I think the taxpayers and industry of this province want to see—the Dean panel report demonstrated and illustrated the need for a tracking system on training. This could be very problematic. This training that has been received by one employer, is it going to be acceptable to another employer? We don't want to duplicate, triplicate and create redundant training programs.

They've asked for a tracking system. We know that this government and our bureaucracy are not very good at creating, managing or implementing tracking systems. eHealth comes to my mind right off the bat, but I think there are a few other tracking systems like gun registries and whatnot that don't have a very substantial or effective track record. Maybe if the minister or the parliamentary assistant has some opportunity throughout the debate, I'd like to know if there are some concepts and ideas on how that tracking system is going to actually be put into place.

The parliamentary assistant mentioned the 400 Ministry of Labour inspectors and that there's been an increase in the inspectors. It's important for the minister to know that your 400 inspectors—there is a wide variation in competency out there in the field. I've had direct experience with a number of them, both on the jobsite before I became a member of this Legislature and afterwards as an advocate and as a member representing employers in my riding.

I want to share this one story with the minister and with this House just to demonstrate the wide variation that we get in labour inspectors. I was at a home builders' association meeting one evening in Perth. The home builders' association had invited the Ministry of Labour construction safety inspector, the enforcement and compliance officer, to the meeting to have a discussion, because they had a number of concerns. It was interesting because, as the Ministry of Labour inspector was up giving his address about the need for a safe workplace, he referred to the contractors as "targets of opportunity," and this is a direct quote. This Ministry of Labour inspector, who was invited to sit with all these contractors and have a meal, referred to the contractors as "targets of opportunity;" that he went out looking for fines. That's what his view was.

This is not a story of make-believe or imagination, Minister. This is a first-hand, direct story. I'm not suggesting for a moment that all 400 inspectors are like this, but there's a number of inspectors I've met directly.

One of the things that I do like with this bill—and I hope what I read in this bill and what's in practice is that the minister will have direct accountability, that when there are problems in the field or in the training, members such as myself, members throughout this Legislature, will be able to go to the minister and demonstrate a failing or a perceived failing, and the minister will have the authority and the wherewithal to make that correction.

Too often we've seen that the trend over the last number of years and since I've been here is that there has been more and more delegation of ministerial authority to subordinate bodies of this Legislature. When that happens, we see a growth of difficulty in getting results. We get that decision-making and that influence ability being obstructed. So that is one element of this bill that has been a different trend from what we've seen from other bills in this House. Again, I'll refer to Bill 151, where decisions in forestry, on forestry licences, are going to be delegated out to another agency of this Legislature. I think it's really important that all members in this House recognize that we need to have a remedy and a process for a remedy for our constituents so that we can advocate for them, so if we do find that one oddball who thinks contractors are targets of opportunity, there is a manner in which we can correct that failing.

I could give you a number of other examples on inspectors, but I think the minister gets my point on this.

There is one other thing that I was disappointed with in the committee on the clause-by-clause. There was one element, one amendment, that was proposed by myself, by the PC Party, and that was to recognize non-union workers as a distinct group. At the present time, the way the bill is written, unionized workers have a distinct number of spots on that advisory and recommendation body, but non-union workers do not have the same recognition. I want to put it on the record that over 70% of the employees, 70% of the workers, in this province are non-unionized. Less than 30% are unionized. Why does the tail get certain recognitions but the rest doesn't? Now, I could be cynical and say, well, this is just par for the course. We have seen it with the relationship between this Liberal government and unions, but regardless of that relationship, regardless of the Working Families, regardless of any of that, there is still an underlying responsibility that we recognize all workers, not just a few. Right? By all means, by certain means, we ought to recognize at least the majority of workers in this province.

With that, I'd like to end off my debate on this. I trust the minister will accept the debate as it's been intended: to offer up some substantive but constructive criticism, and to make sure that the workers of this province indeed are well served by this new legislation.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Questions and comments?

Mr. Peter Kormos: I listened carefully to the eloquent contribution to the debate by the member for Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington. I appreciate

his comments, but I want to underscore once again that the safest workplaces are unionized workplaces. The safest workplaces are workplaces where workers have some significant level of control over the environment that they're working in, and those are places where workers can collectively bargain the conditions that they work in.

1730

For the life of me, I don't understand why this government, a Liberal government, turns its back on some of the lowest-paid workers and the workers working in the most dangerous working conditions in our province: agricultural workers. This government, the Liberal government, denies agricultural workers the right to collectively bargain. For the life of me, I don't understand how individual members can justify that in their hearts or in their minds.

This government as well denies to the most vulnerable workers, the lowest-paid workers, the Walmart workers, if you will, the right to card-based certification so that they can form a union and collectively bargain. They gave that privilege to construction trades; fair enough. But why won't it give that same privilege to the workers who most need it? Workers of whom many are new Canadians, workers of whom many are women.

The Minister of Labour the other day expressed his shock and horror that workers were having their wages stolen from them. Well, gosh, my colleague from Beaches has been telling you about that for months now, workers whose tips are being stolen, and you won't protect them.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further questions and comments?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: It's interesting to hear from the Conservatives that we are too pro-labour and to extend greater rights to individuals, and from the NDP that we're not pro-labour enough. I think that's why many of us are Liberals.

I do share some of the concerns, but I think they're covered. I remember when I was in college, my dad lost his business and he started all over again and created another business within 10 years. He was a very entrepreneurial guy. I remember some of the things that went on. I was cleaning bathrooms and toilets in a shopping mall starting at 10 o'clock. It was supposed to be two hours, but I and all of the other folks—I was one of the few English-speaking people who worked there—were given five hours' work for two hours' pay. There are a lot of employers who aren't very good, but I think this bill finds a balance between employer and labour rights. It's not perfect; we may have to revisit it. But I know the story of our Minister of Labour, and most of us come from these families who have experienced this discrimination because of their sacrifice.

But the other issue that my friend from Lanark—and I do appreciate the thoughtfulness of your comments, but I've always tried to understand this from the Conservatives. We've worked very hard with the federal government to integrate sales taxes, to take \$8.5 billion out of

costs for small businesses and to make it simpler. Anything I've heard out of the opposition party in cancelling the HST would give as a two-tier tax system. How would you avoid putting \$8.5 billion in costs—the very kinds of things that drive the underground economy. The HST actually took away a huge amount. The federal government, which has more financial flexibility, reduced it, but we have one of the lowest sales taxes right now. If you go to Europe, sales taxes in many countries are now over 20%.

The other thing: Our corporate tax rate, especially for small and medium enterprises, are some of the lowest in North America. US tax rates, our largest competitor, are now 35%, several points higher. I keep on hearing, and I've heard this before, that this is driving the underground economy. How can we be driving the underground economy? We've just cut bureaucracy and we have lower sales tax and lower corporate tax rates than most—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Thank you. Further questions and comments?

Mr. Steve Clark: I'm pleased to provide some questions and comments to the address by the member for Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington. I have to say that he does raise some concerns. He talked about the fact that we are supporting this piece of legislation—cautiously supporting, as he stated in his address. I share some of his caution about some of the issues that aren't being addressed in this legislation or, in some cases, are being addressed at the time of regulation.

I, as a member, have concerns about the issue of training. Training was discussed quite openly and quite substantively at the Dean commission, and I know that, using the member's words, Mr. Hillier's words, it's light on the discussion of training.

I think, for better protection and support for workers, especially young workers and recent immigrants—I can think of my son, who is 22. His summer job is working on one of the international bridges between Canada and the United States, doing painting. It's a very high job. Sometimes they're up over 200 feet over the St. Lawrence. That was the first question that I talked to him about when he took that summer job. It was the issue of training and how he was trained for that high height. So I am concerned, as a member.

As well, I'm concerned about the amount of regulations that could be imposed on businesses as part of this; the issues that the member talked about, the HST and WSIB rates, which drive that underground economy. But I do want to say that there is some support on this side. The issues around the interim prevention council and the chief prevention officer are issues that I think we all can support, but there still needs to be that element of caution.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Questions and comments?

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti: I just have a few minutes here to respond to the remarks made by the member from Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington.

As this bill has progressed, and especially at the committee stage, I think we saw co-operation amongst the three parties. We had a very important bill in front of us. I can't think of a more important bill than one that deals with the health and safety of workers. I think every family has the right to make sure that their members come home in the evening and are able to come home safely without having either to be injured or, in the worst-case scenario, to have a death. Unfortunately, that happens periodically.

We put this legislation together as a result of the Dean report. We changed some parts of it due to some of the amendments that were brought forward. I don't have the exact number in front of me. It could be around 12—roughly, approximately 12—amendments that were adopted at committee. I thought that was very, very good.

Addressing the issue regarding non-union representation on the provincial council: The councils will be made up of three parts. There are going to be representatives from workers and employers and, the third component, experts in occupational health and safety. I think that they're going to be concerned about both unionized and non-unionized employees. I think that that issue, hopefully, will be addressed with the prevention council.

Also, the member made reference several times to inspectors looking for targets of opportunity. The whole idea here is to have a prevention council and chief prevention officer who are able to address these issues. That's going to be all brand new.

Finally, I want to say one more thing. A lot of presenters said, "Let's not politicize this issue. Let's not politicize this." We tried our very best to depoliticize it by giving quite a bit of power to the chief prevention officer and the prevention council.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): The member for Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington has two minutes for his response.

Mr. Randy Hillier: I'd like to thank the Minister of Research and Innovation, the members from Welland and Scarborough and, of course, my colleague from Leeds—Grenville.

I want to focus on maybe two points here. The first was the member from Welland's comments that unionized workplaces are safer than non-unionized. Well, that is a popular myth and it's one that I have seen myself, working in both union and non-union construction, that has no basis in fact. It's one that the unions like to suggest, but it has no fact to it.

To the minister: When I was talking about the cost of doing business, the cost of doing business is not just taxation. In this province we have over half a million regulations. There is a substantial cost—not just direct financial cost, but a cost in time—to comply with those regulations. It should be understandable to the minister that we want to reduce the cost for those businesses so that they indeed are not going underground. That does not conflict with our federal counterparts.

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I also just want to make mention to the parliamentary assistant that what we're looking for, what I would think

is appropriate, is, if we're going to identify unionized workers as having a unique spot on those councils, we ought to do the same thing for non-union. Either that or just create workers' spots on that council. If you're going to have unionized identified, we should also have—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Thank you. Further debate?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I'm happy to have an opportunity to speak again to this bill.

The minister and the parliamentary assistant know that we argued for changes to be made to this bill on second reading. We were very concerned about some aspects of the bill that we felt needed hearings so that we could get the views of labour on those issues, and we got the hearings that obviously we were looking for. We got the views of labour on this. The parliamentary assistant and the five Liberal members in committee heard very much what was said, what had to be said—oh, I almost forgot. I would like unanimous consent to stand down the lead for our critic, the member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Is it agreed to stand down the lead? Agreed.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: See, I meant to do that straight up, and then you want to get right into the debate and you forget. It's terrible. As you get older, you forget some things. Does that happen to some of you guys—or are you getting younger?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: One glass of red wine—

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I have a glass of red wine every day, sometimes a glass and a half, and Ontario wine to boot, followed by Chilean wines because my wife is from Chile, followed by Italian wines because I love Italy. The wines from the Florence region, the Toscana wines, are they ever good.

Hon. Rick Bartolucci: Make your own wine.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I would have loved to have made my own wine as my father did. I have not followed that tradition. I say this regrettably.

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: Furlan wines from the north.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: A lot of Furlan wines from the north are good. I've got a brother-in-law who is a Furlan, from the same area, I suspect, that Sandra is from.

But this is not about wine, is it? It's about something else. Do you see how easily distracted I am? People just pull you in all sorts of directions, and one could talk about prosciutto and wine all day long.

So we raised concerns in second reading.

Mr. Ted McMeekin: There were 13 amendments.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: How many?

Mr. Ted McMeekin: Thirteen.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Were you in committee? How many did the government make by way of amendments?

Mr. Ted McMeekin: Quite a few.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: And what about us?

Mr. Ted McMeekin: We took 13 of yours.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Thirteen of ours. Do you see how good Liberals can be from time to time? Every now and then, Liberals and New Democrats, we just reach out, and then Sandra just reaches out again; we're like brother and sister.

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: Oh, don't get carried away, now.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: You're so right, Sandra. You are so right. Do not get carried away, because there are profound differences between us. Isn't that true?

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: Don't get carried away.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: The Minister of Economic Development says yes, there are profound differences—too many. She's not one calling for the merger of New Democrats with Liberals, is she? Yes, siree, and I suspect there are many more Liberals feeling the same way, and I suspect many New Democrats feel the same way, and there are some who probably would love a merger so we could have stronger occupational health and safety. Because if we were one, we would be stronger, wouldn't we? We would be able to put stronger measures in place and ward off the Conservative threat; isn't that so? But let's not get carried away. We're getting ahead of ourselves.

So we have concerns about the bill, the politicization of the health and safety system. We talked about the fact that the chief prevention officer would have some powers, except the chief prevention officer would have to report to the minister, and we were worried about to what extent the chief prevention officer would be limited in his independence, would be limited in what he or she could do when he or she would have to go and seek support, advice or approval from the minister. We were worried to what extent this whole area is predicated on what the minister says about what goes or what doesn't, so we raised that concern on second reading.

We were concerned about the potential for these powers to be used in an arbitrary way or, yes, indeed, even a partisan way, so we called for changes. We wanted changes that dramatically empower the council and the chief prevention officer. We wanted changes that would ensure trade unions are represented on the council in at least equal numbers as employers, and we wanted changes that would protect the political independence of the chief prevention officer and guarantee his or her acceptability to the council. We talked about that.

We were worried about the Workers Health and Safety Centre and the Ontario health clinics for Ontario workers and to what extent their independence was threatened by Bill 160, as it was written. We know that these organizations were respected, and we wanted mechanisms to be put in place to protect their independent governance and ability to set priorities.

We were worried about the accumulation of power by senior Ministry of Labour bureaucrats to write law, concerned about the section of the bill that gives directors of the ministry the authority without any oversight, without any warning, to publish policies that have the force of law.

We were worried about the failure to protect workers from reprisal. We know that vulnerable workers who are victims of reprisal for their attempts to protect their health and safety were not effectively protected by this bill. We said that Ontario workers have the right to participate, know and refuse dangerous work, and these rights must be powerfully and swiftly enforced.

These were the kinds of issues that we reinforced in the debate that we had on second reading, and these were some of the issues, indeed many of the issues, that came back in the hearings that the five Liberal members and others in the committee, New Democrats and Conservatives, heard about.

We say that some progress or a lot of progress was made based on those hearings. We were happy that the Liberal members in that committee heard and made some changes of their own and indeed accepted 13 of our own amendments, I'm told, which means that from time to time the government members are able to hear the other side. Now, it doesn't happen all too often, but from time—

Interjection.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: It's true.

Mr. Ted McMeekin: I was here.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: No, but you were here when the Conservatives were in power. You would say the government—

Mr. Ted McMeekin: Oh, no; I agree. We're much more capable of co-operating.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: So you would know that those who are in government often never hear the other side, which is the dictum of this place that is disregarded by many, particularly governments.

But what I like is that as we get closer to elections, governments become a little more sensitive, supple indeed, and are able to become a little more flexible in their approach to things.

So as we get closer, I think the Liberals decided, "Wouldn't it be nice to just give the NDP and labour some bones, some scraps?" You decided you can do that, that it's in your interest to do. So you did that, and I want to say "good for you," because it doesn't hurt you very much, really.

Is there more to be done? Liberals would say yes. New Democrats would say yes. And where we think there is more to be done is in the area of enforcement. Long-term, the ministry's capacity to enforce the act, its regulations and the Criminal Code in relation to serious health and safety violations has to be enhanced. We believe that, long-term, we must strengthen our current enforcement system.

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Over the years, the NDP has consistently argued that the most effective incentive for employers to improve health and safety is a strong enforcement system based on the principle that the cost of violating the law is greater than the cost of compliance. There are numerous studies for many jurisdictions demonstrating that increased external inspections and external enforcement

result in measurable declines in injury rates. So when we talk about enforcement and when we say that we need to enhance our enforcement rules, that is where we should be moving to.

Has the Liberal government moved in that area? No, not quite. Would that they would move in that direction. And who knows what could happen? An election is coming. They could become emboldened. They could become bold, indeed, and decide that they could make some promises for the next election. You never know.

We say that strong enforcement is vital to address the imbalance of power in the workplace. The internal responsibility system is predicated on the assumption that, when dealing with the workplace health and safety issues, all the workplace parties are equal. But we know that workers and employers are not equal, that those who employ those who are employed have more power, and they tend to yield that power sometimes most unfairly, sometimes destructively, sometimes in ways that hurt workers, and in particular workers who are very, very vulnerable to abuse.

We see the abuse of workers on a regular basis. We see it. We see it from those who are recent immigrants. We see it from those who are here on a temporary visa, those who are here but for the grace of God, and those who are here because the government wants to bring them on a temporary basis rather than on a full-time basis, because what the government really wants to do is employ them and send them back home; employ them without having the full rights that every citizen has or ought to have, and when they're no longer useful, we discard them as if they were Kleenex. There are two million people, as far as I know, who are here on a short-term kind of status, and they're here because we want to abuse them as much as we possibly can. And the federal government takes advantage of it as much as they can.

We know that there is no equal power between those who work and those who employ them, and that is why we say that when you have and where you have strong enforcement, you equalize those differences—not perfectly, but you equalize those disparities as much as you possibly can.

The Ministry of Labour needs more inspectors, and inspectors need more resources such as access to industrial hygienists, ergonomists, toxicologists, nurses, physicians and engineers. We need administrative penalties. The NDP supports the use of administrative penalties, which allow an inspector to impose an immediate financial penalty on an employer.

Ideally, what would we like to see? We would like to see certain violations that would result in mandatory penalties, relying on a schedule of violations and penalties. We would like penalties on repeat violations resulting in higher penalties. Penalties must reflect the seriousness of the violation, how long the violation has been occurring, the number of workers affected and the impact on workers.

Such a system would be speedy and not easily circumvented. Employers and other workplace parties

would be aware of the cost of non-compliance with certain sections of the act. Fines gathered through administrative penalties would return to the ministry and could be applied to improving the ministry's health and safety programs.

The Dean report, by the way, for those of you who don't know, endorsed administrative penalties, and there was no mention of such penalties in Bill 160. This is something that we would like to see implemented as soon as possible.

We are happy that some changes have been made. It has made Bill 160 stronger. It has made it a better bill as it relates to occupational health and safety. Much more could have been done, but we know that sometimes compromises have to be made and we realize that Liberals, as they are, knowing who they are, can only go so far. To the extent that they could, they made this a better bill, and we say: God bless you for doing that.

New Democrats would have liked to have made this bill a stronger bill, but we get what we can get.

I wanted to leave five or six minutes for people to make some comments so I could hear what they have to say.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Comments and questions?

Mr. Toby Barrett: Just a point of order: My wife and my daughter heard that we were sitting at night so they raced up here to get a seat. I'd like to introduce my wife, Cari, and my daughter, Brittany.

Third reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Pursuant to standing order 38, the question that this House do now adjourn is deemed to have been made.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

GASOLINE PRICES

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member for Nepean—Carleton has expressed dissatisfaction with a response to a question. The member has up to five minutes to debate the matter, and the minister or the parliamentary assistant may reply for up to five minutes.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: It's a pleasure to be able to address a question I originally had asked last week, on May 12, 2011, regarding gas prices. It wasn't so much what the government at the time had suggested it was. I had a very serious question, and I had asked what the finance minister meant when he was talking about the HST being applied to gasoline and he said, "It might be that the price would have gone higher had that (HST) not happened."

My question is, what is that logic? This government, of course, refused to respond to me in a reasonable manner, and that's why I felt compelled to bring to the floor this question yet again, because apparently they think adding more tax to something will actually decrease the price.

My constituents disagree. For example, Robert LaVacca, who is not a constituent of mine, who does hail from London, said, "Since the HST has been implemented, I have had to stop my monthly contributions to my RRSP because I can no longer afford to keep up with the extra costs of electricity, heat and gasoline. I have not seen any reductions in the price of goods, nor have I seen anything benefit me personally since the HST arrived."

Les Hibbert, also not in my community but from Lindsay, says, "My concerns centre on the fact that Mr. McGuinty has callously imposed the HST on everyday essentials such as gasoline, hydro and home heating costs. This severely and most unfairly impacts on those people who can least afford it, i.e., low-income earners, retirees, single parents and the unemployed, who in many cases are already struggling to make ends meet."

In my community of Ottawa, Jennifer Brabbs says, "People will no longer be able to put their kids in ice sports, ice rentals ... and to go anywhere on gasoline or do anything, movies etc., let alone heat their homes, use the Internet etc. Why is it that this government can spend, spend, spend and the taxpayers just have to keep on giving?"

And finally, Paulette Davis from Katrine says, "Living in a small community in northern Ontario where you have to drive five kilometres to get to a coffee shop and 36 kilometres to get to your job, this doesn't impress me. With current gas prices, I can barely afford to get my husband to the doctor's or to my seasonal job, never mind buying a coffee. We have to stop this insane tax grab."

Again, I asked a very simple question on May 12 when I requested of the Acting Premier, who was the current transportation minister, what the finance minister meant when he was talking about the HST being added to gasoline. He said, and I quote again, "It might be that the price would have gone higher had that (HST) not happened."

1800

At the time, I was shocked at the response by the minister, who decided to talk about the volatility of the sector. No one disagrees; it is a very volatile sector. The price of gas has been going up. However, it's going up 8% more than it naturally would have as a result of the introduction of that dreaded HST. I actually mentioned at the time that the finance minister said that his idea of relief for families from rising gas prices is by adding 8% more. We can't make that up on this side of the House, because it's absurd. It's as absurd as saying that Samsung will only add \$1.60 to our hydro bills.

It comes back to another question that we have on this side of the House. It's one that we brought to 91 different communities at 60 different events through the blue blitz last Friday, which was that in order to continue to pay for the spending of this government and for many of the scandals—and the fact that they actually believe that adding 8% more to gasoline would decrease the price of gas—it means they must be setting themselves up for a hike to the HST. That's why we're concerned. We be-

lieve that they're setting the stage for a 1% or 2% increase on the HST.

Speaker, you can understand that the people of Nepean–Carleton and the people of Ontario, who are paying high, exorbitant fees on everything from gas to hydro—on 17% more items—need a break.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to address this—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. The member for Timiskaming–Cochrane has up to five minutes to respond.

Mr. David Ramsay: Before I get into some of the details about the tax reforms that our government brought forward, I would say to the member that, when you look at other jurisdictions around the world, I think Ontarians and Canadians in general very much appreciate the high quality of the services that we have in this country. We have high-quality services because we've decided that the people need to pay for those services to make sure we have them intact.

We look at the country south of us, the United States, which is really having an incredible deliberation there. They don't want to pay more taxes and they don't want to cut services. They're basically on the edge of bankruptcy there, as many other European countries and countries around the world are. We're not in that situation. We're running a fiscally sound government here. We have provided, maintained and kept up some of the best services in the world for our people, so that you know that when you go to a hospital, the hospital is there, it's open; that our health care providers are there and can provide great service. Our highways are second to none in the world. Our schools are the best education system in the world. The fact of the matter is, this costs money, and, quite frankly, you get what you pay for. We're very lucky to live in a jurisdiction like Ontario in the greatest country of the world, Canada, where we have decided we have a tax regime that pays for high-quality services.

The member talks about some of the new taxes as a result of the HST. Yes, there's now 8% on energy; yes, that's on the gasoline; and yes, that's on the electricity bills. But as you know, we addressed electricity bills by reducing those by 10%—2% more than 8%. Also, with the tax reform system, many people are paying less income tax now. So while, yes, there is, in some cases, more money out, depending how you spend your money, 90% of Ontarians have more money in their wallets and purses in order to make those expenditures. A tax redistribution system is what it was, shifting more to the consumer side of the taxing, the spending on the consumer side versus the income tax side. People are able to retain more of their earned income, and by choosing how they spend their money, they will hit the HST, but most people are better off.

Also, you have to look at all the other things that we've been doing for people. The children's activity tax credit: You've talked about families, because of the tax, maybe not able to pay for a certain extracurricular activity, yet we've come in with a child's activity tax

credit of \$50 per child and \$100 if the child has a disability. We have the Ontario energy and property tax credit: \$1,025 for seniors and \$900 for non-seniors—so, program after program. In northern Ontario, where we do spend a little more with energy, there are some other programs up there. We've really tried to bring balance to this.

We need to make sure that we maintain high-quality services for all Ontarians, so that we know that our seniors and our children have the best health system in the world, as they do. We want to make sure that we have the best education system, and we need to make sure that we don't foist that expense on our children and grandchildren. We need to pay our way today.

We think we've got a system here that will stimulate job growth in the economy, because this is very sound for business, and jobs are being created every day in this province, 114% beyond what the great recession brought us two years ago.

We're on the road to recovery here. We're one of the best jurisdictions in the world, and it's a tax regime such as this that's making it possible.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): There being no further matter to debate, I deem the motion to adjourn to be carried. This House stands adjourned until 6:45 p.m.

The House recessed from 1806 to 1845.

Evening meeting reported in volume B.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.
Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Steve Peters
Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller
Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman, Tonia Grannum
Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Aggelonitis, Hon. / L'hon. Sophia (LIB)	Hamilton Mountain	Minister of Revenue / Ministre du Revenu Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York–Sud–Weston	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Arthurs, Wayne (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough–Est	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (LIB)	London West / London–Ouest	Attorney General / Procureur général Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud–Ouest	
Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Health Promotion and Sport / Ministre de la Promotion de la santé et du Sport
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Brown, Michael A. (LIB)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Brownell, Jim (LIB)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke–Centre	
Caplan, David (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley–Est	
Carroll, Hon. / L'hon. Aileen (LIB)	Barrie	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism and Culture / Ministre du Tourisme et de la Culture
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa–Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Crozier, Bruce (LIB)	Essex	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton–Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (LIB)	Prince Edward–Hastings	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough–Centre	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (LIB)	Windsor–Tecumseh	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
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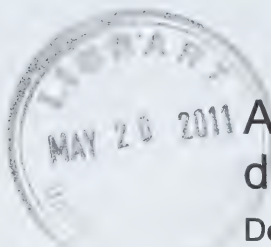
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**Legislative Assembly
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of Debates
(Hansard)****Tuesday 17 May 2011****Journal
des débats
(Hansard)****Mardi 17 mai 2011**Speaker
Honourable Steve PetersClerk
Deborah DellerPrésident
L'honorable Steve PetersGreffière
Deborah Deller

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 17 May 2011

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 17 mai 2011

The House recessed from 1806 to 1845.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION

Resuming the adjourned debate on allocation of time on government order 56.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Toby Barrett: With respect to debating this legislation, initially I'd like to work through this government motion line by line. There's much fodder contained therein and lots of room for commentary. As we know, the motion begins by noting "that the Legislative Assembly ... recognizes that to make life easier for Ontario families"—and the Legislative Assembly may obviously recognize the need to make life easier for families. I will put forward that only with Tim Hudak do we see a plan to try and bring that to fruition, to provide real relief for Ontario families—relief from electricity bills, for example, and relief from eight years of new taxes and ever-increasing taxes. I don't know how anybody could argue against the fact that for the last eight years the Liberal government has increased taxes for the regular guy and gal out there, and brought in brand new taxes like the HST.

The government motion goes on to read "help our economy remain strong." I question when the McGuinty Liberal government came to the "strong economy" party. When did they decide to put that as a priority? Recent history does seem to indicate the opposite. Just look through the last years of Ontario stumbling through the past recession when government taxes and spends like drunken sailors. I, of course, mean no offence to drunken sailors, being native-born from Port Dover.

Over the past eight years—another fact—we've gone from first to worst when it comes to economic strength across the Dominion of Canada. Once again, this has become a bit of a cliché during the past eight years. Once we were the economic engine; we're now spinning our wheels. We're nothing more than the caboose.

Continuing to read this motion from Mr. Duncan, the government's reference to "Ontario's tax plan"—would that be the same tax plan that's given us the largest income tax increase in the history of Ontario as well as the largest sales tax increase in the history of Ontario?

Again, I am not sure if anybody across the way thinks they could argue against facts like that: the same tax plan that always begins with McGuinty promises of no tax increases and always ends with taxpayers digging in deeper to pay for big government.

I follow Twitter. There's a local fellow, Monte Sonnenberg, who writes for the Simcoe Reformer. I'll retweet one of his tweets, where Mr. Sonnenberg describes digging his hand in his pocket and he ended up shaking hands with Dalton McGuinty. That's how he describes that.

Now, this motion suggests the "tax plan for jobs and growth." Again, I find that passing strange, given that I was down in Niagara a few days ago. I spoke at a breakfast with Bart Maves, former MPP and PC candidate for Niagara Falls. He brought out information that there have been 40,000 jobs lost in Niagara alone. That flies in the face of the statement that I read in this motion about jobs and growth. We do know that in recent years we've seen the demise of 300,000 manufacturing jobs—again, jobs that no longer exist in this province, in part because of McGuinty policy.

1850

This government goes on to boast about the 90,000 Ontarians removed from the income tax rolls. Again, I remind the members opposite that they've just removed 300,000 manufacturing workers from the employment rolls; removed them from the income tax rolls. If you lose your job in a factory, you're not paying income taxes.

The motion tells us that apparently the budget provides "93% of Ontarians with a permanent personal income tax cut." Again, you get a personal income tax cut when you lose your job or you go back to a part-time job or someone in your family is no longer working. This is a statement that follows hard on the heels of a government that has been jacking up income taxes, introducing new sales taxes and, of course, implementing sky-high electricity rates.

The statement goes on to suggest that \$12 billion will be provided in tax relief for families—there's a Tim Hudak expression. Put that in the context of the billions and billions of government dollars that have been added through revenue, through tax increases. Again, it strikes me as somewhat disingenuous.

This government is given credit for corporate tax cuts. As I recall, there have been corporate tax cuts in at least three different, broad areas.

I'll move on to the second sentence in the government motion. The government is asking us to—and I'm quot-

ing the words of the statement—recognize that “the economy is turning the corner.” Given our experience with the recession and this province’s unenviable position as a have-not province, I question whether the corner—

Interjection: What does that mean?

Mr. Toby Barrett: What does this mean, “turning the corner”? Are we going into—and let’s hope not—a further gaping chasm—

Mr. Randy Hillier: We’re underperforming.

Mr. Toby Barrett: —of underperformance and a less-than-prosperous future?

Mr. Randy Hillier: Like the Liberals: “underperforming.”

Mr. Toby Barrett: As the member indicates, “underperforming.” It’s an interesting note in this motion—

Mr. Randy Hillier: Reduced expectations.

Mr. Toby Barrett: Reduced expectations. And I do apologize for quoting the Liberal members’ own words back to them. They’re going to have to sit here and bear it. They said this stuff.

The motion “rejects the introduction of a carbon tax,” noting that it “would hurt Ontario’s economic” progress. So much for the green movement; so much for the cap-and-trade experiment.

Interesting: Several government ministers, actually, in spite of this statement, embrace rather than reject carbon taxes. For instance, the *Toronto Star*, a paper read by left-wingers in many cases, reports cabinet minister Glenn Murray’s commentary, and I quote: “It is time for all of us to start to get comfortable with two words: carbon tax.” Similarly, in response to the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario’s report last year, then-environment minister John Gerretsen said, “Certainly a carbon tax is something to look at.” I read the complete opposite in this statement.

In the motion’s final stanza, we see another rejection. This time, we’re supposed to believe that the government rejects “an increase to the HST rate.” Wasn’t it just in the last election that the government promised no HST whatsoever? Quite frankly, I’m predicting that this one can probably be put in that “whopper” category.

It goes on to say that they won’t decrease the rate either.

Interjections.

Mr. Toby Barrett: I really can’t make out the babble across the way, but I’ve been here in this Legislature for, gosh, 16 years. I have opposed the HST from day one. So did Mike Harris. So did Ernie Eves. So did Jim Flaherty, as a finance minister sitting in this Legislature.

Now, everyone across the way will recall Dalton McGuinty signing the taxpayer protection pledge and telling us, “I won’t cut your taxes, but I won’t raise them either.” We all know how that story ended; we’ve seen that film before. Again, fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me. And from what I hear in small-town Ontario, what I hear out on the back roads when it comes to government promises, when it comes to what people in Ontario are telling me, they won’t be fooled again.

We have in the motion some final shots. The cutting of the HST would, they say, “take \$3 billion out of health care and education....” Why would this government even think of taking \$3 billion out of health care and education? I challenge that one. I challenge that statement. We all know that health and education funding in the future will continue to climb every year. You will see that under a Mike Harris government.

Interjection: Mike Harris?

Mr. Toby Barrett: I’m sorry; Tim Hudak.

They conclude by noting that an HST cut would “harm Ontario’s economic recovery.” To harm an economic recovery, you have to have an economic recovery in the first place. I do remind members opposite that you have given us the status of the poor man of Confederation. Once a very proud province, you’ve put us on the dole.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Paul Miller: New Democrats have opposed the HST publicly and focus on practical solutions to make life affordable for Ontario families and to ensure public service works for people. Mr. McGuinty and his government are out of touch with Ontario families, who are having a hard time making ends meet. Harper’s Conservatives brought in the HST and Hudak’s Tories have supported private power schemes, which are also to blame for the sky-high costs. New Democrats are offering change that puts people first.

Corporate profits increased 7.9% last quarter, to \$66 billion. That’s good news for CEOs and shareholders, but it raises serious questions about the economic usefulness of the McGuinty multi-million-dollar corporate tax giveaway. Ontario’s record on post-recession job creation isn’t as strong as the other provinces, like Manitoba, that have put a pause on further corporate tax cuts while their provincial budgets are in deficit. Ontario remains nearly 16,000 jobs below its pre-recession peak while Manitoba has gained 15,000 jobs since the date the recession took hold.

To get a real sense of where this corporate tax cut money is going, it helps to look at one sector of Ontario’s economy and see what they’ve done with the additional revenue. The Ontario government says that the corporate income tax cut will hand \$535 million to banks and \$135 million to insurance companies. That’s on top of \$520 million provided to banks through elimination of capital tax. In total, of the \$4 billion in corporate and capital tax cuts the government has announced, \$1.2 billion will be pocketed by banks and insurance companies, with the vast majority going to just eight companies which dominate Ontario’s financial sector. Over the last year, employment in this same sector has decreased—I repeat, decreased—by 25,000 jobs.

If the money didn’t go to create jobs, where did it go? The attached table tells that story. Profits have increased significantly, CEOs have been awarded significant compensation increases, dividends for shareholders have been boosted, but the hiring spree hasn’t materialized.

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Economic adviser Toby Sanger has analyzed how corporate tax reductions are distributed in the population and has found that the effect is profoundly regressive. In his presentation to the committee, he also noted that it is households, not the corporate sector, that are suffering from a financial crunch:

“Despite record corporate profits, rates of business investment and productivity have been largely stagnant in Ontario and in Canada during the past decade.

“There’s a lot of focus on public deficits, but it’s also important to look at the deficits of the household sector and the balances of the corporate sector. So there’s a complete reversal in this about 10 years ago. Low wage growth and rising house prices led to massive and unprecedented deficits for households, starting about a decade ago. Meanwhile, high corporate profits, cuts in business and corporate taxes and low business investment led to unprecedented corporate surpluses.... A lot of the excess profits went into financial speculative investments, mergers and acquisitions, share buybacks and major excess cash reserves....

“As we all know now, the debt of Canadian households has steadily increased and is now at a record rate of personal disposable income. By some measures, these are higher than rates in the United States....

“Meanwhile, corporate debt ratios have kept on falling, even right through the recession. So once again, the corporate sector has great balance sheets and often lots of excess cash, but they aren’t investing in” our “economy.”

Corporate tax rates are just one of the many factors that a business considers when making investments, but evidence shows that corporate tax cuts have very little positive impact on job creation since they have almost no impact on business capital investment spending.

Since 2000, the combined federal-Ontario corporate tax rate will have been reduced from 44% to 25%, yet business investment has deteriorated since then. In fact, rather than investing in productivity—for example, machinery and equipment—and creating jobs, corporations have been accumulating cash and similar liquid assets at an increasing and alarming rate.

According to Stats Canada, corporate holdings of cash and similar assets reached nearly half a trillion dollars by the third quarter of 2010. Since the beginning of the recession, businesses added \$83 billion to cash holdings. No-strings-attached corporate tax cuts will only boost already astronomical cash holdings levels.

When compared to the industrial regions of the US—our real competitors when it comes to jobs—we’re already more than competitive.

Productivity growth is lagging in Ontario. The Premier recently expressed confusion about Ontario’s dismal progress. But it’s no mystery that there’s simply not enough business investment in plant, machinery and information technology in this province.

Refundable investment tax credits are much more promising as a way to stimulate critical new investments because they provide increased cash flow that is directly

targeted to investment. Quebec’s investment tax credit is one good example of this approach.

Manitoba’s manufacturing investment tax credit is another success story. In Manitoba, the 10% tax credit against payable income tax for investment in buildings, machinery and equipment makes a difference. It’s partially refundable, meaning that manufacturers benefit even when they are in a bad year and not making a profit.

I do believe we brought that forward, that exact bill, and it was shot down, Speaker.

“Keeping control over our own capital markets” is the next category. As witness the ongoing debate over the future of the TMX Group, New Democrats have a fundamentally different view of the capital market strategy than the two old-line parties have.

In the words of Mr. Ermanno Pascutto, founder and executive director of the Canadian Foundation for Advancement of Investor Rights, “In terms of whether this is a merger or a takeover, I think it seems to be fairly established that it’s a takeover of the TMX by the LSE Group. We do not see any clear benefits to the Canadian capital markets or to Toronto, as a financial centre, from this merger.”

More specifically, we in the NDP believe that the centre of gravity for decision-making in this merged entity is going to move from Toronto to London. With this shift in the centre of gravity, Canada is going to be just one jurisdiction of the three: Canada, UK and Italy. As more mergers take place, it will further diminish the influence of Canada.

With the shift in the centre of gravity in decision-making from Canada, a number of issues present themselves.

Number one: loss of control over our capital markets strategy—overall structure. While the OSC and other provincial regulators will still play an important role in regulating the Canadian exchanges, these exchanges will ultimately report to the overall holding company which will be regulated by the UK’s Financial Services Authority. This is very significant. Canadians will not be in control of the overall holding company, and this ultimate governing body, the holdco, will be regulated by the UK’s FSA.

Number two: where strategic decisions will really be made. According to Mr. Bob Dorrance, chair and CEO of TD Securities: “It is very important—and I think this is the differentiator—to understand that the TMX is a self-regulatory body. What that has allowed is that it makes the rules and decisions that dictate how stocks get graded in Canada, who gets to list in Canada, who lists on the TSX Vancouver, when they migrate to Toronto, how much they can finance, how many shares they can issue, whether the board of directors is appropriate—all those rules that are a part of the fabric of how Canada has developed its financial system. That’s the responsibility of the TSX, not of the supervisory commissions. The TSX will now report to the” holdco in London, England. “That’s where management will be.

“The key thing is that the functioning, therefore, of the Canadian capital markets and how they evolve will now

be set—not regulated; policies will be set—in the office of the CEO, and that office, initially, will be in London. That's the regulatory nub."

We in the NDP agree with Mr. Dorrance and we want to be completely clear: We think that if the TMX-LSE merger goes ahead, basic capital market strategy for Canada will be set in London, not Toronto, and that once the merger goes through, there's little that the Ontario or Canadian governments will be able to do to change this.

At its core, the debate over this takeover is all about how you have a capital strategy that makes sense, that fits who we are in Canada and that reflects what we do in our own country.

We cannot afford to get this wrong. I can't emphasize it enough. Years ago, I was in Ottawa lobbying. Years ago, my group warned Canada of the erosion of our base industries; the takeover of our base industries. If I'm not mistaken, 90% of our forestry, 95% of our mining and 100% of our major steel producers are foreign-owned. If you don't have control over your base industries, you don't have control of your economy, and the same thing is happening to the TSX. It's a scary proposition. We will not be in control; Canadian people, the people of Ontario, will not be in control of their destiny. It will be in boardrooms in Europe and the United Kingdom.

Number three: access to capital. Proponents of the deal have argued that by listing on the LSE, Canadian companies will benefit from access to a deeper pool of capital. But as a number of presenters to the committee indicated, Canadian companies already have the ability to list on the LSE, and so far, only 17 of them do. Of the trading that takes place in those 17 companies, 85% of that happens on the TSX. According to these presenters—and we in the NDP support this position: "Global investors come to Canada to finance Canadian companies, and they do it through the TMX exchanges. They do not go through the LSE to finance Canadian companies."

Why do we need them? Why is this? It is worth quoting Mr. Dorrance again: "The TMX Group is a very successful part of a financial system that facilitates investing and access to capital for Canadian and international companies. They are particularly and historically strong at catering to the needs of Canadian companies. They service the dynamics of the Canadian marketplace and cater to the needs of small and medium-sized businesses." So as the saying goes, why fix it if it ain't broke?

Number four: resource financing. In addition, the TMX has become the leading resource exchange in the world. Currently, global resource companies come to the TMX exchanges to raise capital. Global investors provide that financing, both to Canadian companies and international companies. Being part of London really adds nothing at all, and this perhaps reduces our role in resource financing in the future.

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According to Mr. George Teichman, a member of the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada—this might be interesting to the members from the north; this

gentleman has been in this business a long time—"We should not lose sight that the TSM is the largest marketplace in Canada and is our business beacon to the world. This is a strategic industry. Canada's capital markets cannot work efficiently without a stock exchange, and to have Canada's exchange controlled abroad, frankly, is not strategic.

"Exchanges should not and cannot be globalized the same way as, say, company operations moving all over the world or the pricing of oil or gold—you know, 'The world price of gold and oil is so and so.' Exchanges are different. So for those who say that the LSE won't control our markets and that Canada's end of this merger—really, it's a takeover—will remain robust, I say, why does the LSE need 55%? Don't you think that they will, in time, try to muscle companies to list and finance over there, across the pond?" Of course they will. "Won't some executives, lawyers and bankers gradually make the move" from Toronto to wherever they're needed? "And then, perhaps, the world's largest mining convention could even move across" the sea. Hold it in London, England, maybe. "Why, then, isn't a 50-50 marriage good enough? Suppose they hold the 45% end," and we hold 55%? It might be better.

Not only is this province and country going into a position of eroding our base industries, allowing foreign control of our entire economy, but this is the final blow, to foreign takeover. You say, "Well, we've got to operate in a global market." I hear all the time from the other side, "We've got to operate in a global market." Well, let's take a look at that global market in Hamilton, where I'm from. US Steel bought Stelco. US steel bought the Lake Erie works.

Mr. Ted McMeekin: Too big to fail.

Mr. Paul Miller: Too big to fail, yeah.

They bought Lake Erie, and the first thing they did was sign a deal with the federal government saying they would maintain 3.5 million tonnes a year and 3,100 employees. They did none of the above. The government in Ottawa did nothing to help the steelworkers. So what did this company do, bullies that they are? They locked the guys out at Lake Erie—they were out for a year—to force concessions from the workers while giving their CEO a \$6-million raise.

Then what do they do after that little game? They move to Hamilton, and now they've got my guys locked out in our local in Hamilton. The same thing: concessions, break the union's back, more money for their profits, more money for the shareholders at the expense of the working people of this province.

People over there think, "Well, this is just business." I've got to tell you: If it keeps going the way it's going, nobody's going to be making good wages in this country. Everybody's going to work for \$12 an hour, and they're going to say, "Hmm, who's going to buy those Hondas, and who's going to buy the Toyotas? Who's going to buy all the cars, fridges, stoves—all the other big-ticket items?" Nobody. Because everybody is making 11 bucks an hour. They can't afford to buy them.

I see more and more people on the breadlines. There are more and more people at food banks. There are more and more people out of work. Yet they say they've created, I don't know, 600,000 jobs. Well, that went back to 500,000, and now it's down to 450,000. They're dropping from the 600,000 I've been hearing for three years. The 50,000 green venture jobs? Not happening. We don't see those either. Just come to Hamilton. Since this government took office in 2003, we've lost 20,000 manufacturing jobs in the Hamilton area—20,000 in a population of half a million. Absolutely outrageous. That is the critique of the proposed LSE-TSX merger.

We have not yet had a chance to review the details of the proposed Maple Group bid for the TMX Group. However, we can say that we welcome a bid by a made-in-Canada consortium, and as we sort through the details of the Maple Group proposal, we will be looking for provisions that satisfy the concerns outlined above.

In summary, the NDP believes that as things now stand, "Toronto is a leading global financial services centre, the headquarters to strong institutions that weathered the financial crisis, and home to the world's leading resource exchange. As such, it is well positioned to compete globally on its own without this takeover"—takeover. Gee, I wonder what happened in Sudbury. I wonder what happened. A Brazilian company went into Sudbury and locked the unions out. They were out for months and months and months, and this government did nothing to help the steelworkers in Sudbury—nothing.

The TMX group of exchanges has done tremendously well—

Interjection.

Mr. Paul Miller: Speaker, I can't hear myself think. The member from Sudbury is being rude again.

The TMX group of exchanges has done tremendously well, not only in facilitating the capital formation required to grow businesses in Canada but also in developing a global niche that is unique: 55% of global mining companies are listed in Toronto, and 35% of oil and gas companies are listed in Toronto. We think this is a result of a very strong resource capital markets strategy. Why jeopardize it? Why join England? We don't have to go over there.

The NDP also believes that the success of the TMX in the future will have everything to do with the evolution of the Canadian financial markets' business strategy. In the NDP's perspective, the TMX's current business strategy works for Canada and works for Ontario. Our feeling is that we should continue with this situation. There are lots of opportunities for growth. We are not necessarily against the benefits of globalization, but the question is, how do you achieve these benefits in the interests of Canada and Ontario? Not by giving control over the capital markets strategy to a holding company based in London—not a smart move.

Moreover, no matter what changes you make to the deal, you don't believe there is a way to absolutely ensure that the basic formulation and implementation of the TMX capital strategy can stay in Canada for the

benefit of Canadians and Ontarians. We fundamentally see this as a takeover, and we do not believe it offers the right solution to creating a globally sustainable Canadian-based exchange.

The NDP believes that we should continue on our own pattern, our own growth plan, a path that has led to considerable successes—in the past, not recently. We simply don't think this deal should go ahead, period—no deal, no sellout to the European market, no sellout. Keep it in Canada.

New Democrats' general approach to fiscal policy: Before I address the substance of the motion, I want to talk generally about New Democrats' approach to fiscal matters—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I ask all members to come to order.

The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek.

Mr. Paul Miller: New Democrats in office have the best track record when it comes to managing books and balancing budgets. Over the years, New Democrats in power have realized better than most that if we're going to confront the challenges ahead, we can't do so under a massive debt burden—that this government has put us in.

I remember—let me think; it was just a couple years ago that the government used to yell at the Conservatives. "You left us with a \$5-billion deficit." Hello? Twenty billion and climbing.

It was over 50 years ago when Saskatchewan Premier Tommy Douglas—

Interjections.

Mr. Paul Miller: It was over 50 years ago when Saskatchewan—

Interjections.

Mr. Paul Miller: Speaker, you'll have to—it's pretty hard.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Order. Continue.

Mr. Paul Miller: Thank you very much.

It was over 50 years ago when Saskatchewan Premier Tommy Douglas's treasurer, Clarence Fines, famously told his caucus colleagues that the government would make it a priority to balance the books. His reasoning was simple at the time: Should the government's money be spent on people's priorities or on interest payments to the banks? He won that argument, and New Democrats have been guided by that ever since. The reason he won that—and if you notice, NDP governments are just jumping up all over the country. People are starting to see the light. They're getting rid of the same old, same old.

Economists have studied the federal Department of Finance's fiscal tables and have findings that may surprise our opponents. Since 1980, the Conservative governments, provincially and in Ottawa, have tabled deficit budgets 63% of the time. Liberal governments have run deficits in 73% of the budgets they've tabled—73%. Well done, fellas. New Democrat governments do better than both: We're at 50%, better than both of you.

That's a better track record than any other party, a great track record.

But the NDP governments haven't just spent less time in deficit. If we look at the size of the deficits as a share of the GDP, New Democrat governments also have the best record on the GDP. What happened to you guys?

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I ask the minister to come to order.

Mr. Paul Miller: The minister isn't in his seat, Speaker.

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Long-serving NDP governments like those in Saskatchewan and Manitoba have a proven track record on economic policy. For New Democrats, there has never been a contradiction between effective social investment, strong economic growth and fiscal responsibility, in spite of what they say.

New Democrats have made it obvious: We strongly oppose the HST. We're the only ones who said, "Take it off heating oil. Take it off gas." They didn't. The argument that the government puts forward for the HST is that it improves productivity and creates jobs by lowering taxes on business investment, thus making it cheaper for companies to invest in machinery and equipment.

And I do believe we had a 10% manufacturing credit bill that they shot down. I think we had a 50% Canadian content bill that they shot down. I believe we had a 50% buy Ontario bill that they shot down. They're for Ontario. They're for Canada.

In contrast, recently released data from Stats Canada, along with a number of other reports, suggest that there's little connection between lower corporate taxes and new job-creating investments. Since 1999—that sounds familiar—Ontario has provided more than \$20 billion in corporate tax cuts without the job growth and economic growth predicted by business groups and right-wing economists, and them.

In contrast to the HST and the broad-based corporate tax giveaways of the McGuinty government, many economists prefer highly targeted employer incentives that encourage direct investment in new plant machinery, expanded skills training and new hires. Moreover, these economists prefer direct public investment in education and research, and the renewal of infrastructure as more effective than the HST and broad-based corporate tax cuts in boosting productivity, stimulating economic growth and creating jobs. This is also the view of the Ontario New Democrats. So we view the HST, like the broad-based corporate tax cuts the McGuinty government touts, as a very ineffective way of creating jobs—simply bad economics.

Of course, the case against the HST is the strongest on the consumer side. The HST is a very regressive tax that penalizes low- and modest-income folks for simply paying for the basic necessities of life: things like home heating, hydro and gas at the pumps. The truth of the matter is that Ontarians are feeling squeezed and stomped. At a time when Ontarians are paying more for hydro, more for

insurance and way more for gas at the pumps, they simply can't afford to pay 8% more for things like hydro, home heating oil and gas.

A note on the real record of, unfortunately, the Harris-Hudak government: I would be remiss if I didn't address the real Tory record on fiscal prudence when in office. Let's take energy as an example.

In April 1998, Ontario passed the Energy Competition Act, with a commitment to opening wholesale and retail energy markets together in 2000. Under the terms of the act, Ontario Hydro was split into several companies. By 2000, it became clear there were several problems with the government's plan for deregulation. The government reversed a previous decision and announced that after deregulation, Ontario Hydro would continue supplying electricity to certain industrial customers at a cheaper rate. Ordinary customers would pay for the discount.

Ontario Hydro's controversial decision to restart the Pickering A nuclear plant station discouraged new investment, especially since the costs were passed on to the public. Continued uncertainty over how the retail market would operate, lasting almost to the moment the market opened for business, also discouraged new generation investment.

Faced with these problems, the government pushed back the date for deregulation until May 2002. In the meantime, concern over the possibility of lost jobs and rising electricity rates for consumers led to the mounting opposition from a broad range of consumers.

Finally, two unions launched a successful court challenge over the government's plan to privatize Ontario Hydro. In the aftermath, the government was forced to abandon, or at least postpone, this part of its plan. Nonetheless, the markets were open to wholesale and retail access in May 2002. Almost immediately, electricity prices went through the roof due to a terrible market design and a shortage of supply caused by the lack of new generation.

In December 2002, Premier Eves was forced to back-track even further on deregulation and effectively threw the whole hydro deregulation exercise on the scrapheap by implementing an artificial price cap on electricity rates on top of the market rates. In just a few short months, \$1 billion was added to the long-term debt of the Ontario hydro system.

This is the real record of the Conservative government in action. With all due respect to the members to my right, this is not the record of prudent fiscal managers.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Order. The member for Simcoe-Grey, come to order.

Mr. Paul Miller: In summary, New Democrats will not be supporting this motion. Effective fiscal policy requires the often-difficult economic choices that need to be made to reflect a delicate balance between fiscal prudence and crucial economic and social investments. In the opinion of the New Democrats, the McGuinty government has completely failed to achieve this balance,

and the real record of the Conservatives when in power suggests that the Hudak government would do no better.

We certainly feel that some of the programs we brought forward in committee were ignored, once again, by the ruling party, and some of the things we brought forward on committee were also shot down. It's typical of the same old, same old.

If you watch the House, they're constantly yelling at each other and blaming each other for past experiences. Why don't we move ahead? Why don't we look into the future? Why don't we get bright and creative ideas instead of blaming each other for what happened 20 years ago? When they start doing that, this House might work a lot better, because there's a lot of baggage in this House.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Phillips has moved government order 57. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion, say "aye."

All those opposed to the motion, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

Hon. Rick Bartolucci: Surprise, surprise.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Pursuant to standing order 28(h), government order 57 will be deferred until deferred votes tomorrow.

Vote deferred.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE LA SANTÉ ET LA SÉCURITÉ AU TRAVAIL

Resuming the adjourned debate on third reading of Bill 160, An Act to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 with respect to occupational health and safety and other matters / *Projet de loi 160, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé et la sécurité au travail et la Loi de 1997 sur la sécurité professionnelle et l'assurance contre les accidents du travail en ce qui concerne la santé et la sécurité au travail et d'autres questions.*

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate? The member for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek.

Mr. Paul Miller: I'm busy.

Mr. Randy Hillier: No time to get a breath.

Mr. Paul Miller: Thank you.

The NDP is pleased to participate in the third reading debate on the government's response to the expert advisory panel on the occupational health and safety report.

The NDP understands that Bill 160 represents a set of compromises more or less worked out in the Dean report process. Implicit in these compromises is the fact that neither labour nor the employer community gets everything they want in the way of changes to Ontario's health and safety regime. We understand that sometimes politics

is about compromise, but even taking this into account, the bill the government originally introduced fell short of what we had hoped for in terms of implementing the Dean report recommendations.

Our concerns were fivefold:

(1) The politicization of the health and safety system: The original version of Bill 160 placed extensive powers in the hands of politicians, including the power to appoint the CPO and the prevention council. We were deeply concerned about the potential for these powers to be abused in arbitrary ways or for partisan purposes. We wanted changes that dramatically empowered the council and CPO, ensured trade unions were represented on the council in at least equal numbers as employers, and protected the political independence of the CPO and guaranteed his or her acceptability to the council.

(2) The threat to the autonomy of the Workers Health and Safety Centre, or WHSC, and the Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers, OHCOW: It was absolutely critical that these key organizations be respected and that the mechanisms be put in place to protect their independent governance and ability to set their priorities, approaches and philosophy, and develop content, services and information that meet these needs and the needs of workers. We could not support this legislation until such mechanisms were in place.

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(3) The accumulation of power by senior MOL bureaucrats to write the law: We were deeply concerned about the section of the bill that gave directors of the ministry the authority, without any oversight, without any warning, to publish policies that have the force of law. We could not accept any legislation that gave the government of the day these secret powers.

(4) Failure to protect workers from reprisal: Vulnerable workers who are victims of reprisal for their attempts to protect their health and safety were not effectively protected by the bill. Ontario workers have the right to participate and know and refuse dangerous work, and these rights must be powerfully and swiftly enforced. We were particularly concerned that Bill 160 would have placed limitations on the ability of inspectors to appear before the OLRB and provide testimony and evidence to protect workers.

(5) Placing obstacles to joint health and safety co-chairs' recommendations: As originally written, Bill 160 provided no relief to worker members on the JHSC facing stonewalling tactics from the employer side of the joint committee. The power of a co-chair to send a recommendation to the employer must not be subject to restrictions.

The NDP voted against the flawed bill at second reading. We are pleased that there was considerable movement in the committee on most of these items, enough movement that the New Democratic Party will be supporting Bill 160 in third reading. The government voted for many—I repeat, many—NDP amendments. I wish they had voted for more, but I've got to take what I can get. It should also be said that the government introduced

a number of amendments that should have been in the original bill, and we're glad to support them now.

Perhaps most importantly, I want to commend the labour movement for all their hard work and their unwavering commitment in fighting for this much-improved bill. I have no doubt that without their hard work and determination, the government would have been content to push through their original flawed bill and a once-in-a-generation opportunity to improve the health and safety of millions of workers would have been lost.

What still needs to be done? Beyond this bill, there's much to be done.

Enhancement of enforcement capacity: Long-term, the ministry's capacity to enforce the act, its regulations and the Criminal Code in relation to serious health and safety violations must be enhanced. We believe that, long-term, we must strengthen our current enforcement system. Over the years, the NDP has consistently argued that the most effective incentive for employers to improve health and safety is a strong enforcement system based on the principle that the cost of violating the law is greater than the cost of compliance. There are numerous studies from many jurisdictions demonstrating that increased external inspections and external enforcement results in measurable—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Just a moment, please. I'd ask those who have conversations going on in the House to either take them elsewhere or listen to the speaker.

The member for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, please continue.

Mr. Paul Miller: It probably won't work, but—strong enforcement is vital to address the imbalance of power in the workplace. The internal responsibility system is predicated on the assumption that when dealing with workplace health and safety issues, all the workplace parties are equal.

The Ministry of Labour needs to have more inspectors, and inspectors need more resources, such as access to industrial hygienists, ergonomists, toxicologists, nurses, physicians and engineers. They also need easy access to databases and research to assist in addressing new and emerging workplace issues.

Administrative penalties: The NDP also supports the use of administrative penalties which allow an inspector to impose an immediate financial penalty on the employer. Ideally, we would like to see the following: Certain violations must result in mandatory penalties, relying on a schedule of violations and penalties, with repeat violations resulting in higher penalties. Penalties must reflect the seriousness of the violation, how long the violation has been occurring, the number of workers affected and the impact on workers—injuries and illnesses. Such a system would be speedy and not easily circumvented. Employers and other workplace parties would be aware of the cost of non-compliance with certain sections of the act. Fines gathered through administrative penalties would return to the ministry and could be applied to improving the ministry's health and safety programs.

The Dean report endorsed administrative penalties. There was no mention of such penalties in Bill 160, and this is something we would like to see implemented as soon as possible.

In summary, the NDP is pleased with the changes the government made in its own legislation and, as I said, we will be voting in favour of the bill on third reading. But there's still much, much more that needs to be done to protect the health and safety of Ontario workers, and both the party across the way and the party to my right should be forewarned that New Democrats will be on our feet in the weeks and months ahead—and years to come—fighting for a safer and healthier environment for Ontario's seven million workers.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Comments and questions?

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti: I just want to spend my two minutes briefly addressing the points raised by the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek.

We did co-operate at the committee level. I think it was good and to the benefit of all concerned, including the stakeholders. Several of them appeared before committee. I think we had two days of public hearings—correct me if I'm wrong—and then a full day doing amendments to the bill. We made quite substantial changes: We gave more power to the chief prevention officer and made sure that he or she was able to function properly under this new system.

Of course, we know there's a prevention council presently in place and that that council will be put through and have a membership of several members from both labour, the employer and the academic community, who will be able to give information forward to the chief prevention officer, or CPO.

I think, overall, that the bill has gone through substantial change, all for the better; especially for the betterment of those who have to go out there every day and work, and especially those who have to work in dangerous positions. I always think of construction workers first, but then there are those who work in laboratories, who work with chemicals. The list goes on and on: those who can suffer injuries and, unfortunately, do suffer injuries. The bill, of course, is meant to help prevent that from happening and reduce the number of injuries at the workplace.

I'm thankful to both opposition critics for their input into this bill. We did a lot of changing. We heard from a lot of deputations and in the end, we came out with a pretty good bill which, I think—of course, there's more change to come. It's not final, but it's a good start. So I want to thank the member from Hamilton East for his help.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further comments and questions?

Mr. John O'Toole: The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek has a long and distinguished history working with the labour movement, and I respect him and commend him for that. But this is an admission by the government that they failed to take action on the

event on Christmas Day, 2009, where four workers were killed. There were already provisions in the existing legislation where they could have acted.

There is a very difficult kind of choice here—it's kind of the fool's choice, technically—in terms of defanging the WSIB and providing this new position, another public service appointment type of job, which is the chief prevention officer. Now, I don't know what the chief prevention officer might bring to the discussion other than a bit more discipline that's missing today. If they can assure me that there will be lives saved—but it leaves me still asking the question: Is it saying that they don't trust the WSIB and their workplace regulatory framework today? That they need this new layer to sort of overview the minister? Mr. Sousa's a nice minister as well.

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But I remain concerned, although we will support it because worker safety is paramount. Tim Hudak, our leader, always says to us that worker safety and a strong economy go hand in hand. So we're a bit suspicious, as we always are, of the government's move here to sort of shift the focus from their lack of action on the report. Then they had to appoint Tony Dean, a former deputy, to do a report for them, and now they have the report, and they're going to appoint this chief prevention officer. We'll support it in the interest of doing—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. Further comments and questions?

Mr. Ted McMeekin: I'm pleased to offer some comment following the interesting and helpful address from the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek. I've often thought, in my almost 11 years in this place, not only what a privilege it is to be here, but how infrequently at times there are actually opportunities to be collaborative and to work together.

I think in this particular bill there was clearly a shared sense of purpose that emerged. The stakeholders who came out and spoke to the committee were, by and large, quite generally affirming of the government and its direction. All of the committee members who had the privilege of sitting on the Standing Committee on Social Policy, I think, intuited very early that there wasn't a lot of time for partisan nonsense. We're talking about worker safety here and, in fact, the largest overhaul of the province's worker safety bill in some 30 years.

The absolute first priority was enhanced accountability and transparency. I think we've achieved, to a very large extent, some very good adjustments to the bill that will augur well in the context of worker safety.

I was particularly pleased that the committee was able—as the honourable member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek alluded to—to find some ways to work together. There are times when we can be like this, and we can work together. That was one of those occasions. I was really quite proud of the standing committee and the way we came together. I'm pleased to say that apparently all parties in this House agreed to that and will affirm passage of this bill. That's good—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. Further comments and questions?

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: I, too, want to add my comments to the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek. I take his comments in this case—and I want to say this case—quite seriously, because he has told us a number of times that he has been part of a labour movement in his area, and he understands some of the challenges that, frankly, workers face. He's relating this more to the factory type of work, but there's the construction side and all other employees—in many cases in offices or administration—that sometimes we tend to take for granted.

He made some good points. I guess what I want to say, as the minister and the parliamentary assistant alluded to today, they've worked very hard to put this piece of legislation together, and it was a fairly open process. We—and when I say we, I mean all 107 members of this place—had an opportunity to participate, and we're making some historical changes, things that have been lingering for over 30 years. Frankly, we've got to get up to the 21st century when it comes to workplace safety. So I think this gets us there.

The comment that we keep on hearing is that more needs to be done. I'm going to repeat what I said earlier on today. I'm not sure that whatever party of the day has the pleasure of forming government—do they do anything perfect? I think we all strive—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. The member for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek has two minutes to respond.

Mr. Paul Miller: I'd like to thank the member from Scarborough Southwest, the member from Durham, the member from Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale and also the member from Northumberland–Quinte West.

You know, this bill was a very difficult bill. This legislation required a lot of thought and a lot of co-operation from the three parties to get this as right as we possibly could. There were things missing, naturally, that all parties would have liked to have seen in it, but I think overall it's not a bad bill. We need more work. We certainly can improve it as the years go on.

I'll take this opportunity: I don't normally give compliments very often to the other side, but I'll say that the Minister of Labour, Minister Sousa, really wanted to get it right. He approached me two or three times, which is unusual, to get some input and actually listened to some of the recommendations from our presenters, some of the labour movement and some of the safety and health people who came to the committee. I really think he genuinely wanted to get it right.

I think all of us care about people and their safety in their workplace. I think everybody in this House wants everyone to go home at night with their limbs intact and without any serious injuries, because it's important to the family, it's important to the breadwinner of the family and certainly, the kids would be in rough shape if mom and dad got hurt at work and couldn't provide them with a good lifestyle.

So I commend all three parties for supporting this. I would have liked to have seen other things in it, but I

guess three quarters of a loaf is better than none. So, kudos to the three groups.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I'm delighted to have an opportunity to speak to the Occupational Health and Safety Statute Law Amendment Act, 2011; or, as we know it around here, Bill 160.

Mr. Jeff Leal: Labour lawyer, right there.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: In fact, the member for Peterborough is correct: I am a former labour lawyer, so it's certainly an opportunity for me to speak a little bit about something that I spent a few years of my life doing and working on. I had the opportunity to visit some workplaces where we had experienced accidents, and certainly there's nothing more tragic than a workplace accident. It's important that we have the appropriate safety measures in place and that we certainly look at prevention of accidents in the first place.

While the member for Stoney Creek and I don't agree on many things—probably most things—I would say that tonight we do agree that we don't want anyone going home injured from the workplace or not making it home at all, and I think it's incredibly important that we look at these new amendments as improvements to the existing law and improving the state of the workplace for all workers. We also see benefits in this new legislation for our employers across the province.

The new amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act represent the largest overhaul of the province's safety system in 30 years. The bill is the product of a spirit of co-operation and a shared vision of a safer workplace. We are proposing a road map for the future, so that this province's working people have a future free of injury and occupational disease. We're moving forward with changes to our health and safety system that make workplaces safer and help all Ontario workers come home safe at the end of the day, and isn't that the goal that we all want for all of our workers in this province?

If this bill passes, they will benefit. It will benefit all Ontarians, employers and employees alike. As I said, employees would have enhanced safety training and a more effective reprisal complaint process, which is when a worker is fired for reporting unsafe work conditions and reprisals are taken by the employer. There is now going to be a better complaint process for that, to protect those workers; to allow them to make those reports that are so essential in ensuring a safe workplace.

Employers would benefit from a more efficient, streamlined prevention system and compliance assistance. These changes will help save lives, prevent injury among Ontarians and help to make workplaces safer and more productive.

That is an important note to make: that a safer workplace is, more often than not, a more productive workplace. People aren't fearing for their safety, they're not taking extra precautions, they know what the rules are, they know what systems are in place to create a safe

workplace and they are allowed to work more productively.

During the committee process, a number of representatives from labour and employer groups highlighted concerns. We listened and addressed those concerns, as we often do, through the amendments to the bill. The number one concern we heard consistently was surrounding the powers of the minister and the chief prevention officer. We listened and we responded by making changes to expand the responsibilities and powers of the chief prevention officer.

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If passed, our amendments would transfer prevention responsibilities from the WSIB to the Ministry of Labour. I just want to note at this point that the member for Durham, I believe—yes, Durham—highlighted in his two-minute address that he thought we had shown a lack of support for the WSIB by aligning prevention within the ministry. This is nothing to do with a lack of support for the WSIB or with our support for that agency. This is about better aligning the system. It's about having prevention all under one roof, and having a prevention system that is coherent—a word you might not be totally familiar with, but a coherent and united system that was recommended by the Dean report and that makes eminent sense in the workplace.

Appointing a new chief prevention officer to better coordinate the prevention system—the chief prevention officer will now have an expanded role in duties with respect to training, certification powers and monitoring of designated entities. We are also going to create a new prevention council with representatives from labour, employers and safety experts, to advise the chief prevention officer and the minister.

Our approach would be fiscally neutral to the government and would not add to the employer WSIB premiums. In addition, the proposed amendments to Bill 160 are for the minister to publish the chief prevention officer's annual report.

With the proposed amendments, our government is acting on its commitment to implement the recommendations of the expert panel on occupational health and safety, chaired by Tony Dean and composed of representatives of labour, employers and academia.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Order.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Perhaps the member for Durham will have an opportunity to speak after this. We'd love to hear what he has to say about the bill on third reading.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Let's not get him started.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: Oh, well, we barely have a day without a speech from the member for Durham, and I'm sure we're due for one this evening.

I'd just like to take a moment to commend the expert panel on occupational health and safety, as the member who spoke previously had talked a little bit about the history of why this panel was appointed.

It was chaired by Tony Dean, who is a former secretary of cabinet, a very well-respected civil servant here

in the province, well respected by all sides of the House, someone who I have great esteem for and had the opportunity to work with briefly, and just a very bright, capable man who was able to bring together representatives of labour, employers and academia through this expert panel. They did extensive consultations across the province. They received over 400 responses from employers and worker groups and held 50 meetings across the province, and their report was based on the consensus of all of the members of that panel.

The consultations will continue with our stakeholders, to implement recommendations such as the mandatory awareness training for workers and supervisors, entry-level training for construction workers and training for high-hazard activities.

An interim prevention council has already been established to get started on implementation and advice on the recruitment of the chief prevention officer.

The ministry, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, and the health and safety associations will work together to ensure a smooth transition to our new system.

Under this legislation, structural changes will provide, as I said, for a new prevention organization within the Ministry of Labour. The Workplace Safety and Insurance Board's prevention mandate would be transferred to the Ministry of Labour, and a new chief prevention officer will be appointed, reporting to the Minister of Labour on strategic priorities, and will provide leadership on an overall strategy to address occupational health and safety.

The Ministry of Labour would expand its involvement in workplace health and safety education and promotion, and as you know, Madam Speaker, this is incredibly important.

Many of you will remember the ads that used to run on TV about workplace safety, showing some really quite outrageous shots of accidents that were gut-wrenching at times but really made the point that prevention and safety are key in the workplace. It allowed people to see it visually, and had such an impact, especially on our young workers, of what one cutting of the corner could do in a workplace, and how incredibly important it is to follow the safety procedures that are in place in any given workplace.

The minister would also have oversight of the province's health and safety associations, under the leadership of the chief prevention officer.

A new prevention council, with representatives from workers and employer communities and the health and safety experts, would provide valuable input in the direction the health and safety system takes with respect to occupational injury and disease.

The chief prevention officer would have the authority to establish standards for health and safety training in order to enhance this training and ensure workers are properly trained.

Workers, especially the most vulnerable workers, would have improved protections against reprisals for exercising their rights under the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

The new chief prevention officer would be responsible for establishing a provincial occupational health and safety strategy. This is why we're bringing it all together under one roof—bringing all the prevention initiatives that we have in the workplace together under the chief prevention officer, who will have responsibility to establish the provincial occupational health and safety strategy.

The strategy will ensure that the activities would be aligned across all our system partners. As you know, Madam Speaker, the government is a large place. There are lots of different agencies and initiatives going on, and the chief prevention officer will pull together those that have to do with the workplace and workplace safety.

The chief prevention officer will directly report to and provide an annual report to the Minister of Labour on the statutory mandate, and to the Deputy Minister of Labour on administrative public service matters. The chief prevention officer's powers and responsibilities include training and certification powers, and monitoring of designated entities.

I also mentioned that we would be creating a new prevention council through this legislation. The new prevention council, consisting of both employer and worker representatives, would be an important partner in setting the direction for the ministry's prevention activity and will work closely with the chief prevention officer. The prevention council will also advise the minister on the appointment of the new prevention officer and advise the chief prevention officer on the occupational health and safety strategy. Amendments to the bill would ensure that the prevention council is consulted on all significant changes, be they changes that the minister is proposing or that the chief prevention officer is proposing.

The bill would provide that all health and safety representatives in workplaces with six to 19 employees be trained to carry out their health and safety duties. This provision would come into force on a date yet to be determined to allow for sufficient time to develop the training standards and consult with small business and labour on its cost-effective implementation. As you know, Madam Speaker, training is incredibly important in the workplace; how can our young employees know if they're breaking the rules if they don't know what the rules are? So we need to make sure that the training is in place so that we can ensure a safe workplace for all.

With respect to our anti-reprisal portion of the legislation, the proposed amendments would allow the Ontario Labour Relations Board to deal with workplace reprisal claims in a more timely manner. In addition, inspectors would be given the power to refer matters of workplace reprisal to the Ontario Labour Relations Board in certain circumstances, if the worker agrees.

I had the opportunity to work with the Ontario Labour Relations Board and appear on a number of occasions before the board. I know the great work that they do, but I also know that they have a very intense workload, so I think that it's very important that we provide for these. While we are providing that anti-reprisal claims can go

through the board, we are giving inspectors the power to refer matters to the board in certain circumstances. That will allow the inspectors to take care of some of those reprisal claims during the process of investigation.

Madam Speaker, I just would note for you—because I forgot to say it at the beginning—that I'll be splitting my time with the member for Scarborough Centre.

I wanted to speak a little bit about the regulation-making authority. The proposed amendments include a regulation-making authority to allow the offices of the worker and employer adviser in the future to provide support to both workers and employers in reprisal cases. As you know, Madam Speaker, many workers, when they find themselves in a reprisal situation, do not know where to turn for advice and assistance. The offices of the worker and employer adviser will be able to provide them with that assistance.

I know in my constituency office, we often get inquiries from workers and employers—in many cases, small employers—who are not familiar with all of the regulations and legislation that may apply to their workplace. They sometimes come to us seeking advice, and we often direct them to the offices of the worker and employer adviser, who are there to do just that: to provide them with advice and assistance in finding their way through the regulations and legislation that apply to their workplace.

To ensure sufficient implementation time, these provisions would come into effect at a later date, again to allow for all of the work to be done and be in place before they become effective.

We also note that either co-chair of a joint health and safety committee would be able to provide a recommendation to the employer on a health and safety concern, as opposed to both employer and labour co-chairs needing to agree, as is currently the case. This will leave a little bit of flexibility in the workplace and allow either of the co-chairs to be able to approach the employer with suggestions for improvement of safety in the workplace.

As I said at the beginning of my remarks this evening, I have spent a bit of time in the workplace labour field, and I believe that these changes to the Occupational Health and Safety Act are incredibly important for the safety of our workers. They find a fine balance between the employers' interests and the workers' interests, and ensure that we provide processes in our workplaces to ensure the safety of all workers and to make sure that everybody gets home at the end of the day safe and sound.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this bill this evening.

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The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member for Scarborough Centre.

Hon. Brad Duguid: I'm delighted to rise today to speak to an issue that I think is very, very important to, I think it's safe to say, all sides of this House. It's an issue that involves the safety of our workers. I don't think this is an issue that, frankly, divides this Legislature in any way: I think all parties care about workers. Some may

have done more for workers than others, but all parties care about the safety of workers.

I think when we get recommendations that come from someone like Tony Dean, who I know has the respect of all parties in this Legislature—indeed, somebody who has, I think, worked under all parties in this Legislature and done wonderful public service here. When we get recommendations from someone of Tony Dean's stature and the great committee that he served, they're recommendations that the government is very delighted to take very seriously and to implement, and that's what we're here to do today: to move forward with legislation that implements recommendations from one of the province's premier public servants—one of the public servants who's probably greater respected than most. He's had a tremendous, long-time career here at Queen's Park.

I want to talk a little bit about some of the details in this legislation, because there are some very significant changes. We're talking about making structural changes that would provide for a new prevention organization within the Ministry of Labour and transfer the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board's prevention mandate into the Ministry of Labour. I think that's just a better way to provide prevention programs. Frankly, I think if we pass this legislation and bring those programs back into the ministry, it brings it closer to us here in this Legislature. Frankly, when it comes to workplace safety and prevention programs, that's something each and every one of us here and each and every Ontarian needs to take an interest in. I think this may be a way to make our efforts when it comes to prevention even more accountable to the people that we're here to serve.

There is nothing more important, when it comes to our efforts, when it comes to our labour relations, when it comes to workplace safety, than prevention. This government takes a great deal of pride in the fact that we set some very steep targets early on. I was a Minister of Labour at one time. The predecessor to myself, Minister Bentley, set a 20% target of reductions in injuries; I believe it was 20%. We've met that target, and we are very pleased that we did—not so much for the politics of it, but for the fact that when you reduce workplace injuries, you really help Ontario families, because injuries are devastating to families. You also help improve production and the productivity of the workplace, because there's nothing like a workplace injury to really impact productivity and morale in a workplace.

I take a great deal of pride as well—and I think we all should—in some of the projects taking place across the province. Just last Friday, I joined the Premier, the member for Niagara and the Minister of Community Safety out at the Niagara tunnel, where they were engaging in the biggest diameter tunnel built, as far as we know, in the world to this point in time. It's four storeys wide, 10.2 kilometres long, digging through very loose shale rock at times—a project, I think, that is very challenging from an engineering perspective. When a project is challenging from an engineering perspective, obviously there is a certain element of risk to it. Well, I'm really

pleased to be able to say today that Ontario Power Generation advised us last Friday that there was not a serious injury. Four years of digging, and not a serious injury on that site.

We've come a long way, because when you think about it, when you look at the original Niagara tunnel, there were more than serious injuries. My understanding is, there were a number of fatalities when that was built 40 or 50 years ago. So we have come a very, very long way in improving occupational health and safety, and the legislation before us here today takes us, I believe, one step further to making further inroads in reducing workplace injuries.

Prevention is the key. Awareness is the key. I think what we're looking at here is freeing up our ability to do a better job at preventing injuries, and that is going to help many of us—I look at young people. Young people, when they go off to get jobs, sometimes part-time jobs, summer jobs—for some reason, we don't really think of them as being at risk. They're more at risk than anybody else. The less time you've spent in the workplace, the more likely you are to have a workplace injury or a fatality—even worse. I've had to deal, when I was Minister of Labour, with families that have gone through that horrible experience.

We're doing our best here in this province to try to reduce workplace injuries. We're a leading jurisdiction in North America when it comes to that. Many North American jurisdictions are looking to Ontario to see how we did that. We set hard targets and we've achieved them. "How did you get workplace injuries down?" So it's something that I think we, together in this Legislature, and Ontarians, can take a great deal of pride in. It's something that I think impacts all of us.

There are a number of other measures that are being taken in this bill that I think are going to be helpful. We're looking at putting in place a new chief prevention officer, and they'll be reporting to the Minister of Labour on strategic priorities which provide leadership on an overall strategy to address occupational health and safety. I think it's always important that we have leadership, that we have strategy and that, indeed, we continue to strive to reduce—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. Comments and questions?

Mr. John O'Toole: I'm pleased to respond to the Minister of Energy and the House leader. I want to be clear that we definitely support anything that would improve worker safety.

I think it's important to put things in perspective. Yes, probably the incidence of accidents has declined, but so has the number of workers declined—some 300,000 people who are jobless.

The new green energy jobs, that are often more imaginary than real, are part of the discussion we're having here. I have heard from mostly people in the construction group, whom I don't want to—they don't want to be named because what they're afraid of is this: They're not afraid of safety in the workplace at all; they're afraid of more government intervention.

This is pointed out to me in section 22.4(1): "The minister may designate an entity as a safe workplace association or as a medical clinic or training centre specializing in occupational health and safety matters if the entity meets the standards established by the minister."

It goes on to say, "(2) The minister may establish standards that an entity shall meet...."

It goes on to say, "(3) The standards established under subsection (2) may address any matter the minister considers appropriate, including governance, objectives, functions and operations."

This is quite intrusive. This is what they're saying: what to expect. Put this in the climate of how the WSIB itself is doing. We know now that their deficit is nearing \$12.2 billion. This is debt over and above the \$17 billion. So they know that it's collapsing, and when you have high unemployment, the risk of the deficit increases, because there are fewer payrolls paying into it, so your revenue to WSIB decreases. So there's a serious economic imbalance.

We're for worker safety, but this is adding more cost to the creation of jobs. You might say that it's a tax on jobs.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further comments and questions?

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti: I'm pleased to have a little bit of time to comment on the excellent presentations from both the House leader and the Minister of Energy.

The House leader, having experience as a labour lawyer, made an excellent presentation. She was able to condense and bring together all the different aspects of this bill. It is quite complex. It's the biggest change to the Occupational Health and Safety Act in 30 years, as she quite rightly pointed out.

I just want to point out a couple of things that are important, too, that she said. The Ministry of Labour has worked hard to prevent injuries from happening, and we have more than 400 highly trained ministry health and safety professionals supporting enforcement every day.

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There are a couple of other key points. She mentioned as well how effective this new bill will be in preventing some of the accidents. The lost-time injury rate has decreased by more than 30% since 2003, when this government took office. That's a reduction of more than 25,000 injuries. Just last year alone, our inspectors conducted over 62,000 field visits. Of these field visits, more than 41,000 were proactive. In the same time period, over 30,000 workplaces were visited across the province, and during these visits health and safety inspectors issued over 98,000 orders.

The expert panel came forward with some recommendations. I think the legislation tries to match or at least respond to those requests that were made by the expert panel and by Tony Dean. I think this government has done that as thoroughly as possible. Both the roles of the chief prevention officer and the roles of the other members who will be forming the prevention panel have been

clearly laid out in this bill, and again, that's in response to what Tony Dean wanted. Both the House leader and the Minister of Energy pointed that out, and I'm glad to—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. Further comments and questions?

Mr. Steve Clark: I'm pleased to provide a few comments in response to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, the government House leader, the member for Nipissing, the Minister of Energy and the member for Scarborough Centre.

One of the things that the government House leader said that tweaked my hearing was when she talked about it being “fiscally neutral,” and I'm not sure that I know any bill that this government has done that was totally fiscally neutral. We just debated a motion that, again, said that they really, really, really mean it this time in terms of not raising your taxes, so when I heard the words “fiscally neutral,” I have to admit that it shocked me a bit.

This bill, Bill 160—we've talked about it and we've debated it on and off over the last couple of days, and I think we all know that all parties support it. The expert panel that Tony Dean headed, that started the interim prevention council and the chief prevention officer, is something that I think we all want—safer workplaces. There is concern in the industry. One of the things that was discussed at the expert panel was the underground economy, and I know that there is concern that some of the issues that will be dealt with in regulation may cause some of those issues not to happen, and the fact that it may drive more business into the underground economy. I know that many businesses are hurting with increased WSIB rates and the HST; there are a number of issues that businesses are concerned about.

I think the word that I used this afternoon was that this bill is a bit light on training. If there's one gap that we all need to deal with, and perhaps they want to deal with it in regulations, it is the issue of training in the workplace.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Response? Yes, government House leader?

Hon. Monique M. Smith: Another two minutes.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): That's right. Comments and questions?

Mr. Jeff Leal: I heard two terrific speeches tonight: from the member from Nipissing and the member from Scarborough Centre. The opposition should listen very carefully, because the member from Nipissing was one of the leading labour lawyers in northern Ontario prior to her election in 2003, and her reputation in this area was outstanding. I know that there were a lot of opponents who would be in fear when they heard that Ms. Smith was going to be representing someone in any kind of legal battle. I'm surprised that recruiters from Tory Tory DesLauriers or Ogilvy Renault were not in our galleries this evening looking at this fine legal talent, the member from Nipissing.

She did spend a lot of time during her remarks—and the member from Scarborough Centre, certainly—touch-

ing on the main tenets of this bill, which we know has support on all sides of the House and even by the member from Hamilton East-Stoney Creek, who, I would acknowledge, has a depth and breadth of experience in this particular area, probably matched by the experience of the member from Nipissing when it comes to labour law and labour activities.

This bill this evening, Bill 160, is certainly reflective of the Dean report, by the gentleman who was a former Deputy Minister of Labour in the province of Ontario, a gentleman who is widely acknowledged as being an expert in this area.

This is the first time in 30 years that we've really overhauled the Occupational Health and Safety Act in the province of Ontario. This bill will certainly ensure that there's greater safety in our workplaces.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Now, response.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: Perhaps I should have allowed the mistake to stand. I wouldn't have had to put up with the somewhat embarrassing comments about my career. But I did, in fact.

I'd like to thank the members for Durham, Leeds-Grenville, Scarborough Centre and Peterborough, and my colleague the Minister of Energy, who shared my time. I did—

Mr. Jeff Leal: The member for Durham.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I mentioned him. Don't worry; can't miss him.

I did, in fact, enjoy a career in labour law, actually at a couple of Toronto firms, and did do work across the province in my career as a labour lawyer.

One of the things I found during my time as a labour lawyer here in the province of Ontario is—I actually practised under two different governments. I was a labour lawyer during the NDP regime and I was still practising labour law when the Conservatives came to power.

I have to say that during that time, the pendulum swung, and when one particular government was in power, the labour legislation in particular tended to shift a certain way, and the other way when the other party was in power, which is incredibly difficult for labour lawyers, who have to continually work with new legislation that keeps changing and shifting.

What I think is incredibly important about this particular piece of legislation, the first overhaul in 30 years of our Occupational Health and Safety Act, is that it really does come down the middle, under the leadership and guidance of Tony Dean, who is a very well-respected civil servant, respected by all sides of House. He brought together a group of labour activists, employers and academics who have brought together great recommendations that we are moving forward with in this legislation.

Gone are the days of shifting to the right and shifting to the left. Actually, with consultation, we've come up with a happy medium that—I would disagree with the member for Leeds-Grenville—is not going to cost employers more, but is in fact going to create a safer workplace for employers and employees. We all know the high cost of employee injury. This will see reductions in

costs to employers because there will be fewer injuries, because we'll have safer workplaces, which means that our folks will be coming home safely.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Sousa has moved third reading of Bill 160. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour, say "aye."

All opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 30-minute bell.

Mr. Jeff Leal: Madam Speaker, I can help you out here.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Pursuant to standing order 28(h), the vote on G160 will be deferred until tomorrow.

Third reading vote deferred.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Orders of the day.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I move adjournment of the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

We are adjourned until tomorrow at 9 a.m.

The House adjourned at 2019.

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Second Session, 39th Parliament

Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 39^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Wednesday 18 May 2011

Mercredi 18 mai 2011

Speaker
Honourable Steve Peters

Président
L'honorable Steve Peters

Clerk
Deborah Deller

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Deborah Deller

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 18 May 2011

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 18 mai 2011

The House met at 0900.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Good morning. Please remain standing for the Lord's Prayer, followed by the Jewish prayer.

Prayers.

NOTICE OF REASONED AMENDMENT

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 71(b), the member for Wellington–Halton Hills has notified the Clerk of his intention to file a reasoned amendment to the motion for second reading of Bill 196, An Act to amend the Election Act with respect to certain electoral practices. The order for second reading of Bill 196 may therefore not be called today.

Orders of the day?

Hon. Monique M. Smith: We have no business this morning.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): There being no business, this House stands recessed until 10:30 a.m. this morning.

The House recessed from 0902 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. John Wilkinson: I'd like to introduce to the House a former staffer of mine and a good friend of many of us, Mrs. Pamela McDonald-Kuhne, who visiting from England. We're delighted that she's back visiting us today for question period.

Mr. Norman W. Sterling: It's my pleasure to introduce two guests today: Cyril Bladen from Middlesex, England, and Gary Matheson from the city of Toronto.

Mr. Michael Prue: I'd like to introduce my friends who have just arrived: John Papadakis from Fort Erie and his partner, Ellie Fisher.

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: I want to welcome Roxanna Spruyt-Rocks, the executive director of DeafBlind Ontario Services, and Doug Downer, who is the incoming board chair of the same organization. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Tim Hudak: Last week I had the pleasure of having lunch with our outstanding page from Jordan in my riding, Maggy Watson, and I'm pleased to say that her family has joined us here today: her sister Evalyn Watson; mom and dad, Shawna and Richard Watson; and grandparents Mary Catharine and Michael Watson, and Sydney and Stan Robson—a very proud family of our outstanding page.

Mr. Rick Johnson: I would like to introduce the reeve of Haliburton Highlands East, Mr. Dave Burton, who is here as part of the Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock day, which will be taking place in room 247 over lunchtime. I'd like to remind everybody: Please invite everyone to attend this afternoon.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: I'd like to take the opportunity to welcome a couple of guests of mine today: Michelle Moore and Janett Kapinski.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: I'm pleased to introduce some friends that I have from Halton who have come in to view Queen's Park for the day—hopefully, question period will be exciting: Mr. Keith Hess, Mr. Paul Mitrovich, and someone called Sandy Chudleigh is also with them.

Mr. Frank Klees: I'm pleased to welcome to the Legislature Adrienne McKenzie, who is the CEO of Victory Community Credit Union and also a constituent of mine. She's here telling us about the credit union movement. There she is there. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: It's my privilege to introduce my intern, who is doing her master's at Ryerson in journalism and who is with me for a few weeks: Carly Conway. Some of you might find the last name familiar, and I think some of you will remember Carly's uncle, Sean Conway, who was a member here for innumerable years. We welcome Carly.

Mr. Khalil Ramal: I'd like to introduce Harry Joosten from Libro, a famous credit union bank in our region. Welcome to Queen's Park.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): We have guests from the Welland riding: Mary Dolan and Dave Couture.

I would like my colleagues to recognize my guests who are in the Speaker's gallery: Larry Girard and his charming wife, Cindy Girard. Larry is one of the fearsome foursome that go to the Indy 500 each year, and we're ready to go next week.

Also in the Speaker's gallery are Joan's and my daughter, Nancy Crozier, and grandchildren Emma Stoyles and Adam Stoyles.

ORAL QUESTIONS

EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION

Mr. Tim Hudak: My question to the Acting Premier: At a time when Ontario families have seen their own wages frozen or rolled back and at a time when Ontario

families and seniors are struggling to pay for higher taxes and skyrocketing hydro bills, how can Premier McGuinty justify handing out merit pay and bonuses of up to 10% to the bureaucrats who brought us the billion-dollar eHealth boondoggle? Could you explain that to us?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: To the Minister of Government Services, please.

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar: This agency reports to the Minister of Health, but let me just generally say that I absolutely expect all agencies, including eHealth Ontario, to adhere to the rules around compensation restraint. Our government was very clear about our expectations. The Minister of Health is meeting and is going to speak to the board chair and is asking for a full accounting and review of their decisions. We want assurance that their actions and the actions of all agencies follow not only the letter of the law but the spirit of the law.

Performance pay, as you may remember, was actually brought in by the other government. It was brought in by the Conservative government.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: Minister, with all due respect, you set the rules; you enforce the rules. This is wrong. You should stand on your feet and say it's wrong and that you're going to rescind these bonuses of merit pay to eHealth bureaucrats that brought us this scandal.

Minister, I have a daughter who is three years old. Even she knows that she doesn't get rewarded for doing something wrong. It's clear. It's simple.

Will you please stand in your place and say this is wrong and you're going to rescind these merit pay bonuses to the people who brought us the eHealth boondoggle?

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar: I have said it very clearly: We expect all agencies, including eHealth, to actually abide by the rules and regulations that we have put in place. The Minister of Health is meeting with the agency chair and the CEO. She will ask for the full accounting of this.

Talking about daughters, actually, I have got two daughters. I know more about daughters than you will ever know.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Final supplementary?

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Order.

Mr. Tim Hudak: With all due respect, back to the minister, instead of the family shots, let's get back to the point at hand. You have decided to give the eHealth bureaucrats who brought us one of the biggest boondoggles in the history of the planet up to a 10% merit pay increase. I don't have to remind the minister this was a billion dollars for health care that got flushed down the drain, hundreds of millions of dollars into the pockets of Liberal-friendly consultants.

Have you learned nothing from the eHealth scandal? How can you stand in your place and try to justify in any shape, form or fashion a bonus to eHealth bureaucrats? It's wrong. Stand in your place and pull it back.

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar: I'm not sure if the Leader of the Opposition is hearing what I'm saying. I said I expect all agencies, including eHealth Ontario, to adhere to the rules around compensation restraint. Our government was very clear about our expectations. We expect all of our agencies to follow the rules and regulations. The Minister of Health will be meeting with the chair and the CEO and will be asking for a full accounting of all this.

EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION

Mr. Tim Hudak: Back to the minister responsible for the bonus pay to eHealth bureaucrats: Minister, I'm sorry; your answers just don't cut it. This is clear. This was one of the biggest scandals in the history of the province of, a billion-dollar boondoggle, money that went into the pockets of Liberal-friendly consultants. I don't know what kind of rules you claim you are enforcing, but I want to ask you: What planet do you call home now that you think this makes any kind of sense whatsoever? This is an extraordinary abuse of tax dollars. The eHealth scandal keeps taking and taking. It's wrong. Minister, why don't you just say so?

1040

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar: I have made it very clear. We expect all agencies, including eHealth, to respect the rules around compensation restraint. Our government was very clear that we expect them to follow the rules and regulations. The Minister of Health will be meeting with the CEO and the chair of the board and then she will be asking for a full accounting of this. We want assurance that their actions and the actions of all agencies actually follow not just the letter of the law but the spirit of the law as well. That's why the Minister of Health will be meeting with the CEO and the chair of the board.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: This is what I think was happening, Minister: You have signed a number of secret deals, including the 1% pay increase to the largest public sector union after the next election campaign. I suspect that you are trying to keep this secret. The bonus pay for eHealth bureaucrats has brought us one of the biggest scandals in the history of the province.

Minister, I don't know what rules you enforce, but perhaps you can tell us today: Under what circumstances, under what form of reality that you believe in, could a 10% pay increase for eHealth bureaucrats be justified in any shape or form whatsoever? Please tell us how this could ever be justified in the province of Ontario.

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar: This is why our Minister of Health will be meeting with the chair and the CEO of eHealth. We will be asking for a full accounting of it.

But let's be very clear: The performance bonuses were brought by the Conservative government. You set it up. You set up the rules and regulations. We will be asking all of our agencies to completely adhere to the rules and regulations that we set up, including eHealth.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): The member for Renfrew.

Final supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: If there is any reason why we need change in the province of Ontario, it is your decision to give a 10% pay increase to the eHealth bureaucrats who brought us one of the biggest scandals in our province's history. No wonder Ontario families have lost faith in the McGuinty Liberals. No wonder Ontario families are looking for a change.

Let me restate the record, Minister: a billion-dollar health boondoggle, money that went into the pockets of Liberal-friendly consultants, a scandal that finally brought down a health minister sitting behind you here today and chased another one out of politics. Minister, how can anyone in their right mind justify a 10% bonus to the eHealth bureaucrats who put us in that situation?

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar: Let me just share with you a few examples of why the restraint that we introduced is actually working. In late 2008, the government reduced performance pay for senior managers earning \$150,000 or more to zero for the 2009 calendar year. That was reflected on the sunshine list that came out in March, as many senior managers, including deputy ministers, took pay cuts compared to last year's sunshine list.

For example, Cynthia Morton, the Deputy Minister of Labour, in 2010 earned \$204,000. That is less than the \$221,000 that she earned in 2009. George Zegarac, the Deputy Minister of Children and Youth Services, in 2010 earned about \$196,700. That is less than the \$206,590 he made in 2009. Kevin Costante, Deputy Minister of Education, in 2010 earned \$231,694. That is less than—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Thank you. New question?

POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Acting Premier. Yesterday, we revealed that a president of a publicly funded college was reimbursed by his institution for a \$5,000 donation to the Ontario Liberal Party. He paid it back only after we filed a freedom-of-information request. My question is: Is this an isolated incident?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I would have thought that the member opposite might have let this line of questioning go, after yesterday.

But let me just say that there are rules in place that govern political donations. We follow those rules. I trust that the member opposite follows those rules. Our understanding, under Ontario's Election Finances Act, is that the Liberal Party may only accept contributions from individuals, unions that hold bargaining rights for Ontario workers, and corporations that carry on business in Ontario and are not registered charities.

In addition to these legal requirements, the Ontario Liberal Party does not accept contributions from hospitals, colleges, universities, municipalities or from any organization that receives public funding. If you fall

within one of these categories, please do not make a contribution.

Those are the rules. The money was paid back, and the member opposite knows that.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Records show that the president of George Brown College expensed seven donations to that institution for fundraisers in 2008 and in 2009. The donations were eventually repaid. I quote the institution: "The reimbursement to the college was made ... in conjunction with the review triggered by the FOI request."

What's being discussed at these fundraisers that makes college presidents think these are business expenses?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I think the member opposite knows full well that the rules were complied with in this instance. She knew that yesterday when she asked her question, but she didn't reveal that she knew that the money had been paid back.

We are following the rules. In fact, we're the party, we're the government, that has banned lobbyists from publicly funded institutions. We've actually tightened up the rules that have been in place for many years. We will follow those rules. The member opposite knows that we're in compliance, and we will continue to behave in that manner.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: A number of cabinet ministers benefited from public funds being used for political donations. George Brown's president attended fundraisers for the Ministers of Health, Transportation, and Training, Colleges and Universities, and, in addition, a \$1,000 donation was made to the Toronto Centre riding association, all on the public's dime—until an opposition party made an information request.

The government likes to call this "gotcha" politics, but it's clear that they're the ones who just don't get it. What's being discussed at these fundraisers that makes public servants think that attending is a necessity of their job?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Our government has been very focused on improvement in the post-secondary sector. There are 60,000 additional spaces for post-secondary students. This kind of "gotcha" politics really isn't consistent with supporting that sector. What it does is, it undermines the very, very good people who are playing by the rules in that sector.

I have an email from President Anne Sado of George Brown. What she says is: "In the note, you will see that there are two personal cheques used for my expense reimbursement. You will also note that we have now reviewed our accounting processes, recognize the appropriate rules and as such, to ensure no inappropriate reimbursement, I have reimbursed the college for the amounts of the political donations."

I don't think that it is becoming of the leader of the third party to undermine the reputation of a person with as much stature as Anne Sado.

POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Acting Premier. The president of Fanshawe College also expended a donation to the governing party. This donation was also repaid after it was flagged.

Is the Acting Premier concerned at all about this practice going on in publicly funded institutions in this province?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: What I'm concerned about is that everyone knows what the rules are and they follow the rules, and that's in fact what is happening. That's what's going on.

But what I'm more concerned about is making sure that every student who looks for a post-secondary placement in this province or an apprenticeship can find that. I want those kids to graduate from our high schools and to find a place in post-secondary. I want them to have the lives that they dream of, and what we're doing is putting that structure in place so that they can be the best that they can be.

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The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: In September 2009, a Liberal Party fundraiser was held to honour the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. George Brown College bought two tickets, at a total cost of \$1,000. They clearly thought that handing money to the Liberal Party to attend a fundraiser was part of their job. Can the Acting Premier tell us what was discussed at that fundraiser?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: We've been very clear—and in fact, we're the first government that has been very clear—that the use of public money should not be to get more public money; that that's not what it's about. That's why we've banned lobbyists.

We have an open-door policy. We believe that there need to be conversations between people who deliver services in the broader public sector and government. That needs to happen, but the rules about money have been tightened up. We've been very clear what they are, and people will be following those.

That's what the member opposite knows. She knew that yesterday when she asked the question, and she didn't reveal it until she was into her supplementary.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Final supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: A government has been around way too long when they can't tell the difference between the public interest and their own. When public servants think attending Liberal fundraisers is part of their job, it's clear that we need a change in this province.

Why won't the Acting Premier clear the air and explain what was up for discussion at these fundraising events?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Well, maybe the member opposite would like to post some of her expenses, because my understanding is that none of her expenses have been posted.

What we have done is, we have tightened up the rules around the use of public dollars and how those conversations may or may not take place. We have tightened up the rules around lobbyists, and we've made it very clear that when there is a conversation about public policy, those conversations cannot be in the framework of money that is public dollars changing hands. The people who have been giving us donations understand that. The member opposite knows that those donations have been refunded and the rules are being complied with.

ELECTORAL REFORM

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: To the Acting Premier: A week ago, Premier McGuinty and his backroom advisers were running around comparing him to Prime Minister Stephen Harper. Now he's calling Stephen Harper corrupt. Hours after he said his Election Act amendments were non-partisan and federal Conservatives were not implicated in corrupt practices during the federal election, his backroom operatives sent out an email alleging that Conservatives, the Ontario PC Party and our leader were. Will you state categorically in this House that that sort of libel and smear is unbecoming of the Liberal Party and apologize to our Prime Minister and to the Ontario PC leader?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I'm not sure what kind of innuendo or rumour the member opposite is talking about. What we're trying to do is, we're concerned about any allegations or reports of fraud and misinformation that might have taken place during the federal election campaign. What we're interested in is making sure that the provincial election process is as up front, as transparent and as open as possible. That's all this is about. We just want to make sure—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Members of the official opposition: When you ask a question, it would be nice if you kept quiet and listened to the answer.

The member for Nepean—Carleton.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I don't think I'm done.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): You're not finished? Okay.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I am not finished, Mr. Speaker.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Stop the clock.

Acting Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: What the legislation introduced yesterday is about is protecting the right to vote, and I think everyone should be in favour of that.

My question back to the member opposite is: Will she be voting in support of that legislation to protect the right to vote?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Supplementary?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: The email was circulated last night by the Ontario Liberal Party accusing the Prime Minister of these tactics. That is why Ontario families are losing faith in this Liberal government. If the McGuinty Liberals have proof that the Conservatives of Canada and this party are involved in anything, then I challenge you to bring it forward.

The Liberals did not mention that the only campaign caught breaking election laws in the last federal election was the Liberals' campaign in Eglinton–Lawrence, when campaign workers were pulling Green Party pamphlets out of mailboxes. Instead, they decided to put these attacks on the Ontario PCs. We want to propose to fix the real problems with corrupt election promises in this province.

We do have a condition, to answer the minister's question: To pass this bill that you had eight years to bring forward, we want you to include provisions that would ban the sort of collusion that occurs between your campaign and the third party Working Families Coalition—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Thank you. Response?

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Order. Stop the clock. Are you ready for the response?

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Are you ready for the response? Order.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Minister for Consumer Services.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Along with you.

Acting Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: It's very interesting to me that this reaction is coming from the opposition party because it seems to me that this legislation, which is really about protecting the right to vote, is something that they should be able to support without a whole lot of hullabaloo.

We moved as quickly as we could. We want to get this legislation passed before the end of this session. We think it's very important. The fact is, if there are allegations of problems that occurred during the federal election, we want to make sure that none of those can recur.

At the base, at the root of it, what this legislation is about is protecting people's right to vote, to be able to get to the polling station that they should be going to and express their preference on a ballot. That's what we hope they'll be supporting.

EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Minister of Finance. News reports today indicate that eHealth Ontario employees, on average, are receiving 7.8% pay increases on top of merit pay increases. Can the Minister of Finance explain why front-line health care workers are

being told their wages will be frozen while others are seeing huge increases?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: First of all, we salute the front-line health workers of this province, whether you're talking about nurses, doctors, radiologists, technicians—those who provide the front-line services.

We have brought down the average rate of settlement in the public and broader public sectors. Working with our partners in the public and broader public sectors, we have continued to build on our record of investing in front-line services. We will continue to do that across the province.

We have hired some 10,000 nurses, and 1.2 million Ontarians now have a family doctor who did not have a family doctor when we came to office. We will continue to work with the public and broader public sectors, with union, as well as management, as we transition back to a balanced budget at the same time as we continue to build the vital public services that all Ontarians have come to rely on.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: This government's so-called wage freeze was doomed from the start when it expected front-line health care workers, like nurses and paramedics, to take a pay freeze while top health care executives, like Ron Sapsford and former eHealth head Sarah Kramer, received pay hikes and secret golden handshakes. Does the finance minister seriously think his plan is working?

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Hon. Dwight Duncan: It's working a lot better than the social contract ever did. Let's not forget the utter betrayal by that party, to get elected standing up for working people, then turning on working people. Unlike you, we froze management. We froze them by law. We chose to negotiate with unions, and we have had some success. We have had setbacks, but we are bringing down the average rate of settlement. The law that we have established is being followed.

Yesterday Moody's, the third credit rating agency, not only upheld our credit rating, but they said that we're on track to get back to a balanced budget. They said that our plan is working. Unlike that member and her party, we would not unilaterally strip collective agreements across the public and broader public sector. Why don't you reject that now while you have the chance, as you criticize us?

CLEAN TECHNOLOGY

Mr. Rick Johnson: My question is to the Minister of Research and Innovation. Innovation is really about giving ourselves better choices for the future and improving our quality of life. That is why the McGuinty government has embraced clean technology.

Clean technology is the key to continuing to build a strong Ontario economy. Our province is well positioned to become a major player in clean technology, bringing

in \$8 billion in annual revenues. Today more than ever, Ontario's economic and social prosperity depend on our ability to compete and win in the global marketplace. We want to ensure our clean technology companies have access to the capital they need to become global leaders in the clean tech space, especially in the early stages.

How will the minister ensure that we help clean technology start-up companies find access to capital?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Right now, our clean tech sector here in Ontario is home to 3,000 firms—most of them have emerged in the last 10 years—that employ 65,000 people. I think Ontario understands that this is the result of three specific strategies that contrast our government with the opposition.

The first, as the honourable member pointed out, is capital. We have put \$3.6 billion directly into research and development with the private sector. The HST put \$8.5 billion in new capital back into those companies, on talent.

They would add \$8.5 billion in new costs by cancelling the HST, and they would cancel, as they did before, R&D—another \$3.6 billion. If we pursued their policies—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Supplementary?

Mr. Rick Johnson: Innovation and clean technologies can play an important role in developing new economic opportunities while reducing pressures on the environment. The concept of clean technology embraces a diverse range of products, services and processes across the industry that are inherently designed to provide superior performance at lower cost while greatly reducing or eliminating negative environmental impacts.

Ontario families want to make sure that they're using clean technologies to ensure that their children and grandchildren have a greener province. The minister has stated that our government has made substantial investments using Ontario families' hard-earned tax dollars in key projects in the field of clean technology. How do we know that these investments have been helping companies become local and global leaders in the clean technology industry?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: From Kenora to Kitchener to Kawartha Lakes, we are seeing microFIT on small farms and right into large companies emerging in our larger centres and mid-centres, like Cobourg. Not only do we have almost \$20 billion in new capital in relief in the last seven years, the other piece, where we disagree with the opposition, is on talent. They cut half a billion dollars from the university system. They raised tuition by 67%. We have capped tuition, capped debt and added 200,000 places. But still with that, we have to expand more because we have shortages in places like St. Catharines and Niagara in the digital economy. They want to send us back to hack-and-slash and destroy our post-secondary.

The final thing is contracts and trust. The Samsung deal is one of the underpinnings of Niagara. There is a chill going through the investment community because

they will violate the most sacred contracts with our most important private sector—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Thank you.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Minister of Research and Development, sit.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Well, if you were sorry, you would have sat down sooner.

New question.

TAXATION

Mr. Norm Miller: A question to the Acting Premier: Yesterday, Premier McGuinty finally admitted that Ontario families can expect them to raise their taxes again when he said, "We'll keep doing what we've been doing."

His honesty sent a shiver down the spine of Ontario families and it sent his backroom advisers into full panic mode. They hastily assembled a bizarre late-afternoon press conference on the flimsiest of pretexts, and that was to celebrate the status quo. Did he really think he would deflect the attention of Ontario families from his plan to increase the HST with this last-minute attempt to cover up?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: To the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: When countries and sub-national jurisdictions have had their credit rating downgraded and Ontario has maintained it not with one, not with two, but with three credit rating agencies, I say we should celebrate that.

Let me tell you something else: The credit rating agencies have refuted everything you have just said. The credit rating agencies said yesterday that we have a fiscal plan that can be accommodated within existing revenues and get us back to balance. That's what they said. What they talked about is the need to lay out a plan, to say what you're going to do, which we have done in a variety of documents, including the most recent budget.

That member and his party need to tell Ontarians why they voted against our tax cut package and why they voted against the clean energy benefit, and then start telling us what you're going to cut when you start doing more to hospitals and health care, like you did when you were part of your last government.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Order. Your member is going to ask a supplementary now, and I'm sure you'd like to hear the answer.

Supplementary?

Mr. Norm Miller: Well, this is a new milestone for the McGuinty government: They're celebrating not being downgraded.

Even Premier McGuinty has given up believing he won't raise taxes again. After the health tax, the HST, eco taxes on 9,000 items families use every day and more

taxes than I can name, Premier McGuinty has raised the taxes Ontario families pay so many times they know he'll raise taxes again if given the chance. So when he confessed that he will keep raising taxes, like he's done for the past eight years, it was a cleansing moment of honesty.

It should have been commended, but Premier McGuinty is so dedicated to raising taxes he tried to deflect the attention from his slip-up. Too late. So I ask: Will the HST be increased by 1% or 2%?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: We've laid out a budget and a plan that's been affirmed by the credit rating agencies that says we can get back to balance; that says we can continue to make the investments we're making—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): I'm sure you want to hear the answer.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: We already know.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Then come to order.

Minister?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: —and keep our hospitals open and schools open. What the member conveniently forgets to remind people is that when we came to office, there was a hidden \$5.5-billion deficit that his party left behind. We brought forward the Fiscal Transparency and Accountability Act to ensure that that kind of misstatement could never happen again.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): I want question period over before my grandchildren grow up, so we've got to keep this thing going.

Minister?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: Ontarians don't want to go back to when they closed hospitals, when they fired nurses, when they fired teachers. We've laid out a plan. We're cutting taxes. You have voted against every one of those tax cuts for individuals and businesses.

Leadership is about making tough decisions, balancing budgets and investing in those vital public services that all Ontarians expect, and Dalton McGuinty and his government will show the right way to the future, overturning everything they did in the last eight years.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Order, please. New question.

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CORONER'S INQUEST

Mr. Howard Hampton: My question is for the Acting Premier. Two years ago, in May 2009, the Attorney General was asked about the improper use of CPIC, the police investigation tool, in terms of jury selection and jury rosters. The Attorney General responded by saying that this was a very serious issue and it had to be checked out, and a review was under way with the privacy commissioner to make sure this didn't happen again. Four years ago, in 2007, two First Nation families from Thun-

der Bay asked the Attorney General for information about the fairness of the selection of juries with respect to the investigation into the deaths of two young teenagers, and to quote the Court of Appeal, "they got the run-around" from the Attorney General.

Can you explain the very different responses from the Attorney General in these two very similar cases?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: My understanding is that the matter that the member opposite is talking about is back with the coroner to proceed with an inquest. It's important that the coroner's process be able to roll out as is necessary.

I think at least one of the issues that the member opposite is talking about is a multi-jurisdictional issue, and he's talked about it here in the House before. The federal government has a role, obviously, in funding education, and I know that that's part of the issue that he's raised.

It's clear from our track record that the Attorney General and Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and our government are committed to working with First Nations. We're committed to making sure that the processes are in place to make children safe and to make sure that justice is served.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Supplementary?

Mr. Howard Hampton: With respect, that's not what the record shows. In 2009, when questions were raised about interference with the jury system in terms of using CPIC checks, very quickly the Attorney General responded, you got this special investigation by the privacy commissioner, and then you got amendments introduced five months later to the Juries Act to deal with that. But when it comes to First Nation parents who are watching their teenaged children die on the streets of Thunder Bay and they put in a request to make sure the jury system is fair and impartial, the Ontario Court of Appeal says that after four long years, they did not get answers. Instead, they got the runaround, and a lot of time and money was wasted by the Ministry of the Attorney General.

I ask again: How do First Nation families get treated so badly on the one hand, but on the other hand, where it doesn't involve First Nation families, things happen very quickly from your government?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: First of all, as my colleagues have made it clear, our hearts go out to the families of any missing children.

The second thing is that the issues that the member is raising are very complex. They're multilayered; they're interjurisdictional. There are many facets to them. I think the member opposite, to be fair, is exploiting a notion that, somehow, there's an inequity of justice being applied to different people in the province. That is absolutely not the case. That is certainly not our intention.

We will do everything we can, and I know the Attorney General will do everything that he can to make sure that justice is meted out in as fair a manner as possible. But we will work within the bounds of the law.

ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: My question is to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Minister, Ontario farmers are facing damage to livestock and crops from a wide range of wildlife. Farmers receive compensation for losses under the Livestock, Poultry and Honey Bee Protection Act. However, the compensation provided by the act is over 25 years old. Producers in my riding criticize the package for being not only outdated but also far too restrictive.

I know that farmers in my riding were pleased to hear that the government is working to come up with a compensation program that meets their needs. Can the minister please share with the House what steps are being taken to revise the current compensation schedule?

Hon. Carol Mitchell: I'm very pleased to respond, and I certainly understand that wildlife compensation is a very serious concern to our affected producers. We recognize that the wildlife compensation has not been adjusted in 30 years, and that's why we've made changes under the Open for Business Act. We are working with our farmers to come up with a modern compensation program that meets their needs. Farmers wanted this change, and I want to share with you: I heard that at AMO, and I heard it at ROMA. There were over 250 submissions on the EBR posting, and there was a joint OMAFRA-MNR industry working group that made that absolutely crystal clear. We heard it from the consultation done by the ministry.

We are a part of a government that listens, and I'm very pleased to report today on all of the people who have been engaged. Our farmers want change on—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: Minister, as you know, Ontario farmers are ardent supporters of preserving wildlife. Their record is strong, and participation in the environmental farm plan is proof. Farm communities across Ontario appreciate the foresight of the provincial government in providing programs that help balance the needs of food production with the needs of preserving the environment.

Farmers in my riding recognize that wildlife damage is an inherent risk, but as damage levels increase beyond manageable levels, they are turning to government for help. They tell me that not only does the compensation need to be updated to reflect current values, but they feel there is some weakness with the act, as it applies to a limited number of predators and livestock.

I ask the minister: Why did it take 30 years to act on this, and when can we expect to see updated programs?

Hon. Carol Mitchell: I'm very pleased to tell the member that the rollout for the compensation program will be in late spring.

But I wonder sometimes: Do the members from opposite side hear any of the voices from the farmers? Do they hear the voices that wanted the compensation package changed over 30 years? They voted against it. Then they voted against risk management.

One of the things that the farmers look at is, "What can we expect from them?" We always look to how they treated the farmers in the past. Do you know how they treated farmers in the past? There were 1,000 farmers a year leaving the land. And how did they deal with that? They cut the ag budget, and then they shut down the offices. This is how they reacted. Did we see a plan—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Thank you. New question.

DUTY-FREE SHOPS

Mrs. Julia Munro: My question is to the Minister of Finance. Minister, Ontario's land-based duty-free shops have seen a decline in sales by 50% during your time in office, with a loss of more than 700 jobs and millions in provincial taxes. This is due to growing US competition on an unlevel playing field. All of the liquor that is sold in the duty-free stores must be purchased through the Ontario liquor control board, which charges a 50% markup. The duty-free shops are seeking a lowering of the markup to 30%, to help them survive.

Minister, you hold the keys to their survival. Will you lower the markup to help Ontario's duty-free shops?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: It's just like that party: They'll vote against the Ontario child benefit but want a tax cut for liquor stores.

Let me just tell you what we have done—and I'll remind the member opposite that you voted against this. In 2008, the LCBO markups on imported beer and imported wine sold to duty-free operators were reduced from 50% to 15% of landed cost. Coolers were reduced from 30% to 15%. You voted against it. You're trying to have it both ways. You stand up here today and demand we do something. We did it two years ago, and you voted against it—a typical Tory story.

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They won't tell you what they're going to; what they will do is say no to poor kids but yes to liquor distributors. We've got the right balance, the right plan for a better future. Why did you vote against those cuts when you did?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Supplementary?

Mrs. Julia Munro: An economic analysis prepared by the duty-free shops states that lowering the markup would increase gross provincial output by \$25 million, create 220 full-time-equivalent jobs and increase provincial tax revenue, which then you could use in the manner which you've described.

This report was presented to your ministry two and a half years ago. Do you agree with the report, and will you reduce the markup, as the duty-free shops have asked? Don't you want to see 220 more jobs in Ontario, some in Windsor?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: They're killing 3,000 green energy jobs in Windsor, and you have the nerve to stand—look at her. She did a thumbs-up. The member from Nepean—Carleton did a thumbs-up to killing jobs in

Windsor. Shame on you. You come to Windsor and you put—

Interjections.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: She's not giving them a thumbs-up; she's giving the finger to my—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): The member for Nepean—Carleton, come to order. Member for Oxford. Member for Simcoe—Grey. Who else?

Minister?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: She gave a thumbs-up to unemployed people in Windsor who got jobs. Half of the people who have been hired into the new CS Wind plant came off the welfare rolls. And what does she do? She gives a thumbs-up to kill those jobs.

I'll say to her colleague who asked the question: You wanted to lower—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Member for Nepean—Carleton, I'm warning you.

Minister of Finance?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: I say to the member opposite: We lowered the markups; you voted against it. Why? You're trying to have it both ways. You say one thing, you do another thing. No plan, no future, and you give the thumbs-up to killing 3,000 jobs in my community. Shame on you.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): There. Have we all had a stretch now?

New question.

ELECTORAL REFORM

Mr. Peter Kormos: To the Acting Premier: Yesterday, the Ontario Liberal Party broadcast an email that very clearly stated that its proposed amendments to the Election Act were a response to the dirty tricks in the federal election by the federal Conservatives. Only two weeks ago, the twittering Minister of Research and Innovation was tweeting that it was the New Democrats who were responsible for dirty tricks during that election. My question is this: Why can't this band get their rumours straight?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The legislation that was introduced yesterday, as I have said already, is in place. We are introducing it to protect the right to vote. That's what it's about.

I understand that at any given moment of the day, there are allegations and rumours and innuendoes swirling around in the Twittersphere. We're here on the ground, in the real world, introducing legislation that will put in place protections to make sure that provincial elections, going forward, will be open and will protect people's right to vote so that they can go to a polling station, cast their ballot and make their voice heard.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Kormos: Well, down where I come from, we've got a saying: Whoever smelt it probably dealt it. Can the government please confirm today that, in fact, it's the long history of Liberal sleazy campaigning that gives rise to the government's Bill 196?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Here are three of the provisions that we are introducing: We want to prohibit a person from interfering, or attempting to interfere, with an elector's right to vote; we want to prohibit a person from impersonating election officials, candidates or their representatives; thirdly, we are also proposing to increase fines from a maximum of \$5,000 to a maximum of \$25,000, and jail terms from six months to a maximum of two years less a day.

We want the penalties to be tough. We want the rules to be clear. We want to protect people's right to vote. The question is, will the member opposite join with us and support this legislation?

SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS

M^{me} Helena Jaczek: Ma question s'adresse à la ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones. Il y a quelque temps, j'ai rencontré des membres d'une des associations francophones de la région de York, qui m'ont fait part de leur volonté de voir leur région désignée sous la Loi sur les services en français. Ils m'ont dit avoir déposé une demande officielle à l'Office des affaires francophones. Je soutiens ce projet et aimerais savoir : où en est cette demande?

L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur: C'est une excellente question de la députée d'Oak Ridges—Markham. Je la remercie pour sa question. En effet, la région de York est l'une des cinq régions en attente de désignation. Sa désignation est donc présentement en cours de traitement. Ce processus peut parfois être long, car il comprend une analyse assidue de plusieurs critères. Ceux-ci incluent une analyse de la proportion francophone d'une population, du degré de soutien de la communauté et des leaders locaux, ainsi que d'une évaluation des implications financières et opérationnelles de celle-ci. Le fait que de plus en plus de communautés désirent cette désignation atteste du vaste progrès accompli dans la promotion de la francophonie depuis 2003.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Supplementary?

M^{me} Helena Jaczek: Merci pour ces informations.

Madame la Ministre, dans votre réponse, vous mentionnez les détails du processus de désignation. Je me questionne à présent sur les développements concrets une fois ce processus complété. En effet, une fois la région désignée, quels seront les changements vécus par mes commettants? Ces changements auront-ils l'impact désiré?

L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Merci encore pour cette question. Le processus de désignation a pour but premier de servir la communauté franco-ontarienne en assurant, entre autres, la disponibilité de services en français. De ce fait, la désignation d'une région rend notre société plus

inclusive et assure l'épanouissement des francophones dans notre province. Les Franco-Ontariens peuvent ainsi se sentir chez eux avec un gouvernement qui les sert dans leur langue.

Je prends pour exemple la récente désignation de Kingston qui a été un succès grâce au soutien remarquable de la communauté locale. Nous sommes très fiers de nos accomplissements face à la communauté franco-ontarienne et des outils que notre gouvernement offre pour protéger la langue française en Ontario.

ANIMAL PROTECTION

Mr. Frank Klees: To the Minister of Community Safety: Justice Patrick LeSage and Dr. Alan Meek agreed to conduct an independent investigation into the unnecessary killing of 102 animals at the OSPCA's Newmarket shelter. They did so on the understanding that that report would be made public.

My question to the minister is this: The fact is that we have learned from Justice LeSage's office that that report was released to the OSPCA some time ago. Was that report conveyed to the minister? If so, why has it not been made public?

Hon. James J. Bradley: As the member would be aware, it was the OSPCA that actually commissioned the report with Justice LeSage. I'm sure that Justice LeSage gave it considerable deliberation. I think it was Justice LeSage and Mr. Meek at the same time who did this report on behalf of that organization. I'm sure that that organization has looked very carefully at the report, is analyzing it and will distribute that report as it deems appropriate. That report is a report, after all, of that particular organization.

I know that Justice LeSage and others who would be involved in advising on this particular report would be doing a very thorough job. It arose as a result of a situation that arose with the OSPCA, and they asked that it be undertaken, and we'll all be very interested in the report.

1130

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Supplementary?

Mr. Frank Klees: It's most disturbing that the report that was delivered to the OSPCA has not been conveyed to the minister who, although he declines responsibility, is responsible for this file. The LeSage-Meek report will either vindicate the minister's confidence in the OSPCA or it will confirm that in fact the OSPCA desperately needs provincial oversight. The minister and Liberal MPPs defeated a resolution in this House that would have ensured provincial oversight of the OSPCA.

I would ask the minister to ensure that the report is conveyed to his attention immediately and that it is made public, so that we can know whether the minister is vindicated or whether the resolution that called for provincial oversight was in fact the right thing to do.

Hon. James J. Bradley: I have to say to the member, first of all, that I hope I didn't imply to him that I have

not received a copy of the report; I have. I simply say to him that while I would be analyzing and looking at the provisions of it, it is not our report to release. It is their report. I am confident they will release it to the public. I'm looking forward with anticipation to that. I think it'll engender a good deal of interest in the public. They will have canvassed a lot of the issues that were asked for by the OSPCA, and they will be releasing that to the public appropriately. They have to deal with their board and with a number of other people there.

I'm very confident that they are going to be releasing that report. I think all of us will look forward to analyzing it very carefully and determining what action might be forthcoming from such a report that I think we all feel is—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Thank you. New question?

NUCLEAR WASTE

Mr. Peter Tabuns: My question is to the Acting Premier. This week, Bruce Power withdrew its request for permission from the US government to ship radioactive steam generators across the Great Lakes because of the widespread opposition from mayors, First Nations and Great Lakes communities, or perhaps because the US Department of Transportation won't approve the plan without a full environmental assessment.

Why is the government of Ontario not requiring an environmental assessment of this plan before allowing Bruce Power to transport radioactive steam generators on Ontario roads?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: To the Minister of Energy.

Hon. Brad Duguid: I want to commend Bruce Power for listening very closely to the concerns of First Nations. I think that's important. Frankly, it reflects the changes that have taken place here in this province over the last eight years. Bruce Power took very seriously the issues being raised by First Nations, and they have, in a sense, put on hold this particular decision that they're taking through.

These kinds of decisions have gone through a very vigorous process with the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission. Indeed, I wrote to Bruce and advised them to make sure they're taking every safety precaution they can.

The party opposite had an opportunity to participate in those hearings, and we didn't hear a word from them.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Over 96,000 people have signed a Council of Canadians petition urging the government of Ontario to stop this shipment of nuclear waste. Steam generator radioactivity levels are 50 times above the legal shipping limits. The shipment poses a serious threat to drinking water in the Great Lakes. The shipment sets a dangerous precedent. Why is your government not acting to stop this shipment?

Hon. Brad Duguid: I think in his first question he said that Bruce is putting on hold the shipment—I think. Now, in his second question, he's telling us to stop something that, right now, does not appear to be going forward.

This has been through a full process. Bruce is a private company. They've gone to the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission; it's the federal government's responsibility. We've asked all parties to take every precaution to make sure safety and public health are tantamount. Indeed, I believe they have. The shipment now, I understand, is on hold, and I would think the member would be pleased with that.

But I think what we haven't heard from the party opposite—we know that the Leader of the Opposition wants to kill thousands of jobs across this province. We haven't heard a peep out of that party standing up for the thousands of clean energy workers who will lose their jobs if they get their way. What do you think about their jobs? Why don't you stand up with us for a strong clean energy economy? We haven't heard a word from you when it comes to that. Ontario workers deserve to hear where the NDP stands on those thousands of jobs that are—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Thank you. New question.

DRIVER LICENCES

Mr. Khalil Ramal: My question is for the Minister of Transportation. Minister, there are some people here in Ontario who are uncomfortable driving under specific conditions, whether on a 400-series highway or at night-time. In order to obtain a driver's licence in Ontario, sometimes you are required to drive on a 400-series highway. As a result of that, many people will lose their driver's licence.

Last June, I introduced Bill 97, called the Michelle Krohn Act, which would allow drivers of any age to voluntarily obtain a driver's licence with restrictions. These restrictions would mean that those who have this driver's licence can drive under certain conditions and in certain places. Also, it's important for many people, especially in rural areas, to obtain those driver's licences to be able to drive around and serve themselves, instead of depending on other people.

Minister, can you tell us what you are doing for the people who cannot drive and are losing their driver's licence in order to obtain—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Thank you. Minister of Transportation?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I really want to thank the member for London—Fanshawe for raising this subject. It's something that has been raised with me a number of times. It's a very important discussion. Right now in Ontario, we have some of the safest roads in North America. We have a medical review process that determines whether a driver should be on the road or not, but the

reality is that we have a lot of seniors, particularly, who are concerned about their licences being taken away.

I think this is a discussion that we have to have. I think we need to look at what is going on in other jurisdictions. I certainly welcome input on this subject. As I say, it has been raised from a number of quarters, but at the end of the day what we have to look at is what safety precautions must be taken to keep our roads the safest in North America.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): The time for question period has expired.

Mr. Mike Colle: Good job, Mr. Speaker. Let's hear it for the Speaker.

Applause.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): I think, coming from over here—particularly over here—you're glad that it's my last question period, is probably what it is.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: We want you to spend four more years, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Thank you. I don't mind that interjection.

Mr. David Zimmer: Throw somebody out.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): How about you?

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): No, you can sit down. Just go back to your seat; that's all.

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Pursuant to standing order 38(a), the member for Nepean—Carleton has given notice of her dissatisfaction with the answer to her question given by the Acting Premier on election laws. This matter will be debated today at 6 p.m.

DEFERRED VOTES

SUPPORTING SMOKE-FREE ONTARIO BY REDUCING CONTRABAND TOBACCO ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 APPUYANT LA STRATÉGIE ONTARIO SANS FUMÉE PAR LA RÉDUCTION DU TABAC DE CONTREBANDE

Deferred vote on the motion for second reading of Bill 186, An Act to amend the Tobacco Tax Act / Projet de loi 186, Loi modifiant la Loi de la taxe sur le tabac.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Call in the members. This is a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1138 to 1143.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): On May 5, 2011, Ms. Aggelonitis moved second reading of Bill 186, An Act to amend the Tobacco Tax Act.

All those in favour, stand one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Aggelonitis, Sophia	Gélinas, France	Murray, Glen R.
Albanese, Laura	Gravelle, Michael	Naqvi, Yasir
Arnott, Ted	Hardeman, Ernie	O'Toole, John
Arthurs, Wayne	Horwath, Andrea	Oraziotti, David
Balkissoon, Bas	Hoskins, Eric	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Barrett, Toby	Hoy, Pat	Pendergast, Leeanna
Bartolucci, Rick	Hudak, Tim	Phillips, Gerry
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Jaczek, Helena	Prue, Michael
Bradley, James J.	Jeffrey, Linda	Pupatello, Sandra
Broten, Laurel C.	Johnson, Rick	Ramal, Khalil
Brownell, Jim	Jones, Sylvia	Ramsay, David
Caplan, David	Klees, Frank	Rinaldi, Lou
Carroll, Aileen	Kormos, Peter	Ruprecht, Tony
Chudleigh, Ted	Kwinter, Monte	Sandals, Liz
Clark, Steve	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Savoline, Joyce
Colle, Mike	Levac, Dave	Smith, Monique
Craiton, Kim	MacLeod, Lisa	Sousa, Charles
Delaney, Bob	Marchese, Rosario	Sterling, Norman W.
Dickson, Joe	Matthews, Deborah	Tabuns, Peter
DiNovo, Cheri	Mauro, Bill	Takhar, Harinder S.
Dombrowsky, Leona	Meilleur, Madeleine	Wilkinson, John
Duguid, Brad	Miller, Norm	Wilson, Jim
Duncan, Dwight	Mitchell, Carol	Witmer, Elizabeth
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Moridi, Reza	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Gerretsen, John	Munro, Julia	Zimmer, David

Delaney, Bob
Dickson, Joe
Dombrowsky, Leona
Duguid, Brad
Duncan, Dwight

Mauro, Bill
Meilleur, Madeleine
Mitchell, Carol
Moridi, Reza
Murray, Glen R.

Takhar, Harinder S.
Wilkinson, John
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Zimmer, David

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): All those opposed, please stand one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Arnott, Ted	Horwath, Andrea	Murdoch, Bill
Barrett, Toby	Hudak, Tim	O'Toole, John
Bisson, Gilles	Jones, Sylvia	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Chudleigh, Ted	Klees, Frank	Prue, Michael
Clark, Steve	Kormos, Peter	Savoline, Joyce
DiNovo, Cheri	MacLeod, Lisa	Tabuns, Peter
Gélinas, France	Marchese, Rosario	Wilson, Jim
Hampton, Howard	Miller, Norm	Witmer, Elizabeth
Hardeman, Ernie	Miller, Paul	
Hillier, Randy	Munro, Julia	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 50; the nays are 28.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): All those opposed, stand and be recognized by the Clerk.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 75; the nays are 0.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 17, 2011, the bill is ordered referred to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.

TIME ALLOCATION

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): We have a deferred vote on the motion by Mr. Phillips for allocation of time on the motion by Ms. Smith concerning Ontario's tax plan for jobs and growth.

Call in the members. This is a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1147 to 1148.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): On May 17, Mr. Phillips moved government notice of motion 76. All those in favour, please stand one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Aggelonitis, Sophia	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Naqvi, Yasir
Albanese, Laura	Gerretsen, John	Oraziotti, David
Arnott, Ted	Gravelle, Michael	Pendergast, Leeanna
Arthurs, Wayne	Hoskins, Eric	Phillips, Gerry
Balkissoon, Bas	Hoy, Pat	Pupatello, Sandra
Bartolucci, Rick	Jaczek, Helena	Ramal, Khalil
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Jeffrey, Linda	Ramsay, David
Bradley, James J.	Johnson, Rick	Rinaldi, Lou
Broten, Laurel C.	Kwinter, Monte	Ruprecht, Tony
Brownell, Jim	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Sandals, Liz
Carroll, Aileen	Levac, Dave	Smith, Monique
Colle, Mike	Matthews, Deborah	Sousa, Charles
Craiton, Kim		

Aggelonitis, Sophia
Albanese, Laura
Arnott, Ted
Arthurs, Wayne
Balkissoon, Bas
Barrett, Toby
Bartolucci, Rick
Berardinetti, Lorenzo
Bisson, Gilles
Bradley, James J.
Broten, Laurel C.
Brownell, Jim
Caplan, David
Carroll, Aileen

Gravelle, Michael
Hampton, Howard
Hardeman, Ernie
Hillier, Randy
Horwath, Andrea
Hoskins, Eric
Hoy, Pat
Hudak, Tim
Jaczek, Helena
Jeffrey, Linda
Johnson, Rick
Jones, Sylvia
Klees, Frank
Kormos, Peter

Murdoch, Bill
Murray, Glen R.
Naqvi, Yasir
O'Toole, John
Oraziotti, David
Ouellette, Jerry J.
Pendergast, Leeanna
Phillips, Gerry
Prue, Michael
Pupatello, Sandra
Ramal, Khalil
Ramsay, David
Rinaldi, Lou
Ruprecht, Tony

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE LA SANTÉ ET LA SÉCURITÉ AU TRAVAIL

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of Bill 160, An Act to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 with respect to occupational health and safety and other matters / Projet de loi 160, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé et la sécurité au travail et la Loi de 1997 sur la sécurité professionnelle et l'assurance contre les accidents du travail en ce qui concerne la santé et la sécurité au travail et d'autres questions.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Call in the members. This is a five-minute bell.

On May 17, Mr. Sousa moved third reading of Bill 160. All those in favour, please stand one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Chudleigh, Ted
Clark, Steve
Colle, Mike
Craitor, Kim
Delaney, Bob
Dickson, Joe
DiNovo, Cheri
Dombrowsky, Leona
Duguid, Brad
Duncan, Dwight
Flynn, Kevin Daniel
Gerretsen, John
Gélinas, France

Kwinter, Monte
Lalonde, Jean-Marc
Levac, Dave
MacLeod, Lisa
Marchese, Rosario
Matthews, Deborah
Mauro, Bill
Meilleur, Madeleine
Miller, Norm
Miller, Paul
Mitchell, Carol
Moridi, Reza
Munro, Julia

Sandals, Liz
Savoline, Joyce
Smith, Monique
Sousa, Charles
Tabuns, Peter
Takhar, Harinder S.
Wilkinson, John
Wilson, Jim
Witmer, Elizabeth
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Zimmer, David

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): All those against, please rise.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 79; the nays are 0.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

EVENTS AT QUEEN'S PARK

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): We're just about finished. Thanks for your patience. I would like to remind members at the end of question period that the Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock day is taking place in room 247, right after question period, and I would like to remind the members of the VON Canada fifth annual Queen's Park wellness clinic, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. in committee room 2.

There being no further business, this House is in recess until 3 p.m. of the clock.

The House recessed from 1155 to 1500.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Pat Hoy: I'm pleased to introduce to the House the finest staff that any MPP could ever have here at Queen's Park. Seated over here in the gallery are Fran and Frances from my Toronto office, and up here from Chatham-Kent-Essex are Charlene, Shannon and Mike, the best staff in Ontario.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

THOUSAND ISLANDS PLAYHOUSE

Mr. Steve Clark: It is with great pleasure that I rise to speak about the Thousand Islands Playhouse, truly one of the finest theatre companies in Ontario. This is a very special year for the playhouse, as it has raised the curtain on its 30th anniversary season. For three decades this small but mighty company has staged world-class productions in Gananoque at the Springer Theatre and Firehall Theatre venues.

In its debut 1982 season, the playhouse drew about 6,000 people to three shows. From those humble beginnings it has blossomed into a star performer. Every year its shows now attract some 40,000 patrons, providing a remarkable \$20-million boost to the region's economy. Those figures rank it among the top five summer festivals in Ontario.

Among the 189 productions that have graced the playbill, the playhouse can boast 24 world premieres. I'm proud that this success story in my riding is also recognized as a showcase for Canadian talent, particularly young artists hoping to gain the experience they need to make it on bigger stages.

Playhouse founder Greg Wanless certainly believed in what he started all those years ago, as he continues as their artistic director to this day. To Greg and everyone whose efforts have contributed to making the playhouse the treasure it has become, I offer my sincere congratulations.

I'd also like to encourage everyone to take in a performance at the Thousand Islands Playhouse during this special year. The seven-show 2011 lineup features *The Marvelous Wonderettes*, *Wingfield: Lost and Found*, *Lend Me a Tenor*, *Heroes*, *Ned Durango*, *The Drowning Girls*, and *Billy Bishop Goes to War*.

HAMILTON TOY MUSEUM

Mr. Paul Miller: The Hamilton Toy Museum was recently founded by two Hamilton East-Stoney Creek residents, Chris and Shannon Weston, both of whom are teachers. The museum's mission is to: establish a community toy museum in Hamilton; provide educational workshops and activities for the benefit of the public; preserve the cultural heritage inherent to the museum's collections, with particular attention paid to the contributions of Canadians; and to assist other Canadian children's charities to raise awareness and funds for their causes.

The museum doesn't have a permanent location yet, so Chris and Shannon are holding a gala event, which essentially is the museum launch, with the goal of raising funds towards a permanent museum location. The initial fundraising gala, a dinner and silent auction, will be held on Monday, June 6 at Hamilton's historic Liuna Station, starting at 5:30. If you can be in Hamilton on June 6 and would like to support this new initiative, please call 905-545-2595 or send an email to collecting@cogeco.ca.

I congratulate Chris and Shannon on their hard work on, and the innovative nature of, this initiative.

ALLIANCE FOR EQUALITY OF BLIND CANADIANS

Mr. Dave Levac: Founded in British Columbia in 1992, the Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians, the AEBC, is a consumer group of blind, partially sighted and deaf-blind adults with a common goal to preserve and enhance the rights of such persons in Canada through

public education, advocacy and other initiatives that they have done.

The AEBC was founded out of a desire for equality and empowerment of blind people in Canadian society.

This weekend, Friday, May 20, to Sunday, May 22, is the 19th annual national convention, which will be held in Brantford, Ontario. For the first time, this convention will be hosted by the Brant chapter, which has operated in Brantford and Brant county for almost three years. This convention is a tremendous opportunity to showcase what Brantford, Brant, Six Nations and the Mississaugas of the New Credit have to offer.

To all, on behalf of all the residents of the riding of Brant, I extend a grand welcome to the convention-goers and remind those who are attending that we are open for business.

We deeply appreciate all the work that the Brant chapter has gone to, first, for scoring this convention, because it's the 19th, and also for their hard work in preparing for it. I will be very proud to be there to help greet them as they start their convention deliberations. Thank you, and congratulations to the AEBC.

BUSINESS AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Last week, the Tillsonburg Chamber of Commerce in my riding held its 13th annual Awards of Excellence to honour local businesses for their success and to recognize their contributions to our community and our environment.

I'm pleased to rise to recognize this year's winners, such as ServiceMaster, a company that grew from a home-based business 26 years ago to an 11,000-square-foot facility today, and was recognized last week with the business productivity award.

I also want to recognize Otter Valley Foods, which received the environmental award for reducing its water consumption by 30%, saving 25 million gallons of water annually. I also want to commend them for their use of local ingredients.

Future Transfer Co. Inc. won the award for economic development new investment for their new facility on Tilson Avenue.

Three years ago, Barb Morgan, along with her daughter and husband, started Morgan Realty in a depressed market. However, they persevered, and today they have 12 agents.

I particularly want to commend the winners of the community service award, Terry and Cindy Crevits of M&M Meat Shops, who were unable to attend the event because they were, appropriately, at a barbecue raising money for charity.

All these companies succeeded through hard work and innovation. They also demonstrated a desire to give back to their community.

On behalf of the people of Oxford, I want to congratulate all the winners and all the Tillsonburg companies that were nominated.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Mr. Khalil Ramal: On May 6, I had the opportunity, along with my colleagues Chris Bentley and Deb Matthews, to attend the official opening of London's new Emergency Operations and Training Centre as part of Emergency Preparedness Week.

As this House knows, Emergency Preparedness Week aims to raise public awareness about the importance of being prepared for emergencies, whether it's a blackout like we saw here in Ontario in 2003 or natural disasters such as a flood or tornado.

The Emergency Operations and Training Centre is equipped with state-of-the-art technology and helps emergency responders in London to work together as a team and receive and send out information to the public. The new facility also allows for significant improvement in the collaboration of public safety and emergency response resource providers.

I would like to congratulate the city of London on the establishment and opening of this impressive facility. Designed to be the nerve centre for major emergencies in the city of London, the Emergency Operations and Training Centre is a state-of-the-art facility that can be used for training purposes and emergency exercises or during an actual emergency.

It is jointly funded by the federal and provincial governments, and I congratulate the city of London for utilizing every penny they received from the province and from the federal government to improve their ability to serve the people of the city of London. Again, congratulations to all the people who put out the great effort to establish this incredible and impressive centre.

WIND TURBINES

Mr. John O'Toole: My riding of Durham is home to some of the leaders in energy. In fact, Durham region is the home of the Darlington nuclear plant as well as the Pickering nuclear plant.

Today there was a meeting at Queen's Park that had to do with the city of Kawartha Lakes. One of the issues there that often comes up from constituents in my riding is the unwanted intrusion of the wind turbines.

The one failure in Bill 150, the Green Energy Act, is the lack of a duty to consult with citizens as well as municipally elected leaders in the community. It's a problem in the city of Kawartha Lakes, which was here today, and it's a problem in my riding.

The Clarington Wind Concerns group, led by a young educator in our riding, Heather Rutherford, has been very instrumental in raising awareness of the lack of consistency with the municipal plan for the agricultural area that this added intrusion would bring to the community.

1510

So I commend the organization, Clarington Wind Concerns, for their public advocacy to get the McGuinty government to listen to people about the appropriateness of wind turbines in communities across Ontario, where indeed they're unwanted.

Of all of the things that we hear that the McGuinty government is doing, this is one that I can tell you is not very popular, and it will affect us in the future.

GLEBE CENTRE

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: It is my great pleasure to recognize the Glebe Centre, which is a charitable, not-for-profit, long-term-care home providing residential care and community outreach services in my riding of Ottawa Centre.

Since 1880, the site at 950 Bank Street has been caring for the elderly citizens of Ottawa, now for 125 years. They have over 250 residents, including a floor that offers special services for Asian-Canadian residents, strongly supported by the Chinese-Canadian community.

Abbotsford House, a vibrant, popular community centre, located just next door in a heritage home, offers a variety of programs to its over 900 clients and members. These include programs for people with dementia, at-home support assisting seniors to live independently, and activities of all kinds for the body, mind and soul.

There are 350 dedicated staff, including registered nurses, personal support workers, program facilitators, food service workers and environmental and administrative personnel. The Glebe Centre has about 300 volunteers who give over 24,000 hours of their time each year to supplement and enrich the day-to-day lives at the Glebe Centre.

They're celebrating their 125th year on Saturday, June 4. I want to wish a big thank you to all the staff and volunteers at the Glebe Centre for their service to our elders.

BREWING INDUSTRY

Ms. Helena Jaczek: The Ontario Craft Brewers association is comprised of 25 brewers dedicated to making great-tasting beer right here in Ontario.

In my riding of Oak Ridges–Markham, we are privileged to have one of Ontario's outstanding breweries, the King Brewery. This brewery has won many awards for its true-style Czech pilsner, including gold at this year's Canadian Brewing Awards for Canada's best European-style pilsner. The King Brewery has distinguished itself among critics as one of the premier craft brewers in Canada, and I am proud to have them in my riding.

The Ontario Craft Brewers will be hosting their second annual Ontario Craft Beer Week, which will kick off on Father's Day and will run in communities throughout Ontario from June 19 to 25, 2011.

Ontario Craft Beer Week will feature a series of special events designed to expose consumers to the craft beer experience, with tasting events, brewery tours, cooking demonstrations, food pairings, beer dinners and much more. Activities will take place in breweries, restaurants, bars and outdoor venues throughout the province.

This spring, the LCBO will be stocking the OCB discovery pack, which offers a hand-selected combination of great brews from brewers across Ontario. I urge you to

explore some of the 200-plus brews offered by OCB member breweries, but please drink responsibly. This long weekend, be safe. Do not drink and drive.

ROSS SMITH

Mr. Jeff Leal: I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. Ross Smith, a member of my community who recently lost his battle with cancer at age 68.

In the 1930s, AON Inc. was begun by Ross's parents, Arthur and Myrtle Ross. They had two sons, Ross and Hugh, who were groomed by their parents to take over the family business. Ross Smith grew to become one of the most successful businessmen to have lived and worked in Peterborough.

As a businessman, he was a visionary. He saw the needs of Peterborough, especially the downtown core, and he met those needs by building parking garages and residential and commercial buildings and renovating and preserving residential structures, and is best known for his establishment of exceptional long-term-care homes in Peterborough.

I know that his mother, Myrtle, was an inspiration to his creation of retirement residences, making sure his facilities provided a comfortable home for seniors—including his mother, who resided in Princess Gardens.

Ross always tried to utilize the local tradesman when he embarked on one of his many projects. He gave back to the community in a significant way. Ross Smith had a big heart when it came to Peterborough and was a major supporter of fundraising and not-for-profit organizations.

He believed in supporting his community in every capacity. His death is a huge loss for his family, friends, staff and the community of Peterborough.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. Norman W. Sterling: I beg leave to present a report on the commercial vehicle safety and enforcement program from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Mr. Sterling presents the committee's report. Does the Chair wish to make a brief statement?

Mr. Norman W. Sterling: On this particular topic, the committee had no further recommendations than the auditor's recommendations.

Report presented.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

Mr. Michael Prue: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private

Bills and move its adoption, and send it down with page Jonathan.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Grannum): Your committee begs to report the following bill without amendment:

Bill Pr48, An Act to revive 917866 Ontario Inc.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

Report adopted.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. Norman W. Sterling: I beg leave to present a report on infrastructure stimulus spending from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Does the Chair wish to make a brief statement?

Mr. Norman W. Sterling: Again, on this particular topic, the committee had no further recommendations to make.

Report presented.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. Norman W. Sterling: I beg leave to present a report on hospital board governance from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Does the Chair wish to make a brief statement?

Mr. Norman W. Sterling: As with the two previous reports, the committee had no further recommendations to add to the auditor's recommendations.

Report presented.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. Norman W. Sterling: I beg leave to present a report on the assistive devices program from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Mr. Sterling presents the committee's report and moves the adoption of its recommendations. Does the Chair wish to make a brief statement?

Mr. Norman W. Sterling: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I want to note that on the three previous reports I was not available for the meetings. Therefore, in writing the report, the committee sought not to make further recommendations. However, on the present report, where I was present, we did prepare a report and added some significant recommendations—not that my committee works hard only when I am there; I'm certain they work hard when I'm not there as well.

As you know, the public accounts committee reviews the auditor's report. With regard to the assistive devices program, the committee undertook a very unusual pro-

cess. Next week, I will be presenting the second report of the public accounts committee on best practices, and it will deal specifically with the procedure that the committee chose to take with regard to reviewing the assistive devices program.

In March 2010, the committee reviewed the sections of the auditor's report in December 2009 dealing with the assistive devices program. So we reviewed it in March 2010.

Rather than writing the report after the first hearing, the committee took the very unusual step of asking me as Chair—with a little bit of prompting, I might add—to write to the deputy minister of health, because notwithstanding that the deputy minister had appeared with regard to the assistive devices program, the committee was very concerned that the program and the structure of the program perhaps needed overhauling. So I wrote to the deputy minister on behalf of the committee.

As well, the committee took the unusual step of calling the deputy minister back in November, even though we had heard from him in March, after he had heard some of our concerns over how the assistive devices program was functioning.

1520

So we now have prepared this report in response to the second set of hearings, and I would urge all members of the Legislature to read this particular report. The report not only points out our recommendations but also acknowledges that the ministry has now made significant savings because of some of the urging of the auditor and some of the urging of the committee. In fact, those savings have already amounted to over \$7 million because of the actions of both the auditor and the public accounts committee.

I think this is an excellent example of how constructive criticism, constructive work, non-partisan work by a legislative committee of this assembly, can work to better the systems, to better provide services for our people, and can save the taxpayers money.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to adjourn the debate.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Mr. Sterling has moved adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Debate adjourned.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

HUMAN RIGHTS CODE AMENDMENT ACT (GENETIC CHARACTERISTICS), 2011

LOI DE 2011 MODIFIANT LE CODE DES DROITS DE LA PERSONNE (CARACTÉRISTIQUES GÉNÉTIQUES)

Mr. Colle moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 199, An Act to amend the Human Rights Code with respect to genetic characteristics / Projet de loi 199,

Loi modifiant le Code des droits de la personne en ce qui a trait aux caractéristiques génétiques.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member for a short statement.

Mr. Mike Colle: The bill, if passed, will amend the Human Rights Code of Ontario to include genetic characteristics as a prohibited grounds of discrimination. The act currently includes race, marital status and disability, among other things, as prohibited grounds of discrimination. In addition to other amendments, various sections are amended to provide that every person has a right to equal treatment, without discrimination because of genetic characteristics, with respect to services, goods, facilities and the occupancy of accommodation, the right to contract employment and membership in various types of organizations.

PREGNANCY AND INFANT LOSS AWARENESS DAY ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 SUR LA JOURNÉE DE SENSIBILISATION À LA PERTE D'UNE GROSSESSE OU D'UN BÉBÉ

Mr. Paul Miller moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 200, An Act to proclaim Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Day / Projet de loi 200, Loi proclamant la Journée de sensibilisation à la perte d'une grossesse ou d'un bébé.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member for a short statement.

Mr. Paul Miller: This bill proclaims October 15 each year as Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Day.

MOTIONS

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

Hon. Gerry Phillips: I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice, regarding late shows.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Agreed? Agreed.

Hon. Gerry Phillips: I move that the late show standing in the name of the member for Nepean–Carleton be deferred until Tuesday, May 31, 2011.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The members have heard the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

POLICE WEEK

Hon. James J. Bradley: Before I begin the formal statement, I would like to note for all members of the Legislature that it's being done in the presence of Larry Molyneaux, the president of the Police Association of Ontario; Dave McFadden, the board chair; and Ron Middel, the CAO, who are in the gallery. We welcome you to the Legislature today.

I rise today to bring to the attention of members and the public that this week, May 15 to 21, is being observed as Police Week in Ontario. Police Week is an occasion to pay tribute to the work of the brave and committed men and women who serve us as police officers and help keep our communities safe. Their work is demanding. They serve us selflessly with devotion. Ontarians are fortunate to be so well served. We can point with pride to a continuing decline year after year in the incidence of crimes in Ontario.

I congratulate Ontario's police officers for the great job they are doing and thank them on behalf of all Ontarians.

Permit me, Mr. Speaker, to express on behalf of the government of Ontario our condolences to the family of the late Inspector Steven Waite, detachment commander of the Ontario Provincial Police Hawkesbury detachment. Inspector Waite was an outstanding police officer who lost his battle with cancer last Saturday.

This year's theme for Police Week, Working Together for a Safer Community, is all about that joint effort. The McGuinty government has provided more than \$100 million annually to intensify police efforts in crime prevention and community safety initiatives. The McGuinty government's financial assistance to police services helps fund the hiring of additional police officers and provides grants for successful programs. Many of these programs are based on partnerships between the police and the community—partnerships that help to keep all Ontarians safe.

As part of Police Week, we will expand a successful program that combats guns and gangs to more communities across the province. We will also be reminding Ontarians not to drink and drive.

Recently, I had the opportunity to sit down with representatives of the Police Association of Ontario and the Ontario Association of Police Services Boards to discuss their request for a ministry-led working group with our police stakeholders to look at how we can find efficiencies in our current police practices. We will be moving forward immediately with the creation of an efficiencies working group. Reducing the administrative burden makes sense. It means that our officers can spend more time on our streets protecting our communities and keeping Ontarians safe.

Throughout this week, police services will be showcasing successful partnerships within the community and

inviting the public to share in these activities. I want to urge members of this House to participate and pay tribute to the hard work and dedication of the police officers who serve us so well in Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Responses?

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: Minister, you took the words right out of my mouth. It's incredible; we had almost the same speech.

I'd like to welcome the police officers here today—Ron and Dave and Larry—and welcome and thank all the police officers who serve us so well here in the province of Ontario. It's a very difficult job. As the minister said, there are many times, late at night in different parts of the province, whether they're on roadways or the waterways—you often forget how many people are out there trying to protect us so that we have such a safe and wonderful province.

I also want to acknowledge Inspector Steven Waite and his family and express our condolences.

I also want to mention something very briefly about the police memorial we had here a couple of weeks ago, on May 1, when we paid tribute to the family of Officer Ryan Russell. That was a very touching police memorial, as was the funeral a few months earlier.

I was encouraged to hear the minister say something about a working group around a way to find efficiencies within the system. I think that should be a ministry-led working group. I'm hoping that that's something we can move on very quickly, because I can tell you, Minister, when I'm talking to some of my friends who are stakeholders in the policing industry, one of the things they tell me continually is the amount of administrative time they spend on particular cases. If we can find ways to streamline that system so that more of those front-line officers can be on the streets protecting us, that will be a good move on behalf of all Ontarians. I'm sure we can find those efficiencies. In my discussions with some of these gentlemen, I think that that's certainly possible.

1530

Also, I think it's important to acknowledge that there's more we can do to help some of our policing friends.

Just a quick comment on the front-line police officers and on the people who belong to the associations across the province: We often tend to forget the administrative staff. Many of the administrative staff put a lot of time and effort and a lot of background work into helping our front-line officers as well. I was told that at the OPP reception. When I got up and said a few words, one lady came forward and said, "You didn't mention anything about the staff people in the different offices." I wanted to put that on the record as well today.

I think also that there are some ways we can support the policing as well. One way: I think we have to do some kind of review on the role of the director of the SIU. Some of the comments that were made in the last year by the director—and I've asked some of the questions to the minister here, the Attorney General—haven't done a lot for morale, and I'd like to see the government look towards a review there.

I think also that the police ended up kind of like the meat in the sandwich on the G20. They were blamed for things, and yet as things roll out, we know that there are some problems with some of the special legislation that was passed.

Also, there are areas we can help by actually fast-tracking or moving on some of the legislation that we've asked for. I know that I introduced a private member's bill on drug-endangered children because the Minister of Children and Youth Services felt that it wasn't necessary, but when you talk to the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, they felt that it was something that was needed very much in this province. I know that I'm going to be speaking at a conference next week, I believe in Stratford, on that particular topic. Of course, over and over again—I think it's been seven or eight years now that I've been talking to the OACP, and they've been asking, "When are we going to finally see changes to the pawnbrokers' legislation?" That's something that I believe the Attorney General promised. We've asked that question in the House a few times.

These are bills that should move forward and should be debated. Obviously at this time of this session, as we move towards the election, we likely won't see that, but it would still be nice to see some kind of announcement that would say that the government's interested in these particular topics.

But that's taking away from the fine work that the officers do. I'm really happy that we've got comments made here today in Police Week. As a typical example: This coming weekend, the police will be out in full force as cottagers head towards cottage country and our traffic will be very heavy.

I wish them all the best. Thank you, guys, for all being here today as well for Police Week.

Mr. Peter Kormos: I'm pleased to be able to respond on behalf of New Democrats here at Queen's Park to the Minister of Community Safety. Of course, police weeks occur every year, but the Police Week that occurs in the shadow of an upcoming provincial election acquires a special quality, and the police know this. They see three political parties all competing with each other to demonstrate themselves as at the head of the line when it comes to being pro-cop. The pandering that takes place is sometimes embarrassing.

Look: Cops neither need nor want pandering. We can stand here and make all the gracious statements in the world and attest to our support for our police officers, but let's be candid here. There isn't a member of this Legislature who doesn't support cops in this province or in their respective communities; who doesn't understand that they do dangerous and important work; and, quite frankly, when they're the ones whose house is being broken into or when they're the ones who are being mugged, who doesn't want the biggest, meanest, toughest cop in the world showing up on the scene with all of the tools that that cop needs to protect that person.

So here we are, paying tribute to police officers, as we should. It is Police Week. And we're saying all the right

things, but are we doing the right things? The Ontario Provincial Police were here a couple of weeks ago. They met with the minister, and I know they spoke of him as a fair and understanding person. Then I explained that it isn't just the minister himself involved; there's a Premier's office and a Minister of Finance and a Chair of Management Board.

See, the OPP explained to us that they need at least 600 new police officers to be able to do core policing—never mind any of this add-on stuff; never mind any of the special-focus policing that attracts the headlines and the front page: to do core policing. OPP officers talked about communities that they're policing where an officer is an hour away from another officer. They talked about the scenario when they are attending to instances of, let's say, domestic violence—a very dangerous scenario for a police officer to walk into, to enter into. So there's a police officer who's got a report of a woman being beaten, who knows that she or he should have the backup support of another police officer, but he also knows that that other police officer is an hour away, Minister. That police officer, of course, doesn't sit in his car and wait for an hour before attending to the matter; he or she enters in there, at great risk to themselves, in their interest of protecting someone else. So you talk a good game, but walk the walk. The OPP needs a stronger complement of police officers—600 to do core policing alone.

We talked with them about the illegal tobacco act, the new legislation that this government, the Minister of Revenue, sponsored, and the cops said, "Fine and good. But it's all about priorities. You can create all the new laws in the world, but we have to prioritize because we have such scarce resources." And the likelihood of enforcement of the illegal tobacco act is about this much when you have to prioritize, and when you're talking about violent crime and talking about apprehending violent offenders and talking about collecting the evidence that's necessary to convict those people or at least prosecute them and hopefully convict them in a trial.

You know that salaries around cops have been an issue lately. I, for one, am confident that our police officers deserve the salaries—the fair salaries, the good salaries—that they negotiate. They do hard, demanding, dangerous work. The standards for admission to the police force have never been higher; the qualifications have never been greater. They're under constant scrutiny, as they should be, but then to hear people howl because police officers are being paid fairly—and are being paid a salary that's commensurate with their expertise, their skill and the hazards they incur during the course of their work—I find offensive.

What that means, of course, is that municipal taxpayers can't be the only source of revenue for salaries of police officers. Policing is labour intensive and it's expensive. You either want good cops or you don't. Do you want enough cops or not? And if you do, you've got to pay for them. Municipalities can't pay for them on their own with a municipal tax base. That means this government has to step up to the plate and support pol-

icing with stable funding across this province, both provincially and at a municipal level, in a way that they never have before—in a way that this government simply refuses to.

PETITIONS

HIGHWAY SAFETY

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I have a number of petitions here. It's a petition calling on the Ministry of Transportation to install traffic lights at the intersection of Highway 12 and Fairgrounds Road in Orillia.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the intersection of Highway 12 at Fairgrounds Road in Orillia is a main traffic link for Notre Dame Catholic School, for the Odas Park fairgrounds and a number of local businesses; and

"Whereas we are concerned about the increased congestion and safety of the travelling public and the transportation of children to Notre Dame Catholic School;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to have the Ministry of Transportation install traffic lights at the intersection of Highway 12 and Fairgrounds Road, Orillia."

I am pleased to support this and give it to Jonathan to present to the table.

1540

ÉDUCATION EN FRANÇAIS

M. Michael Prue: J'ai une pétition pour des écoles publiques françaises adéquates. Elle se lit comme suit :

« À l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario :

« Attendu que l'article 23 de la Charte canadienne des droits et libertés garantit l'accès à un enseignement public de langue française;

« Attendu qu'il y a, depuis des années, une pénurie sérieuse d'écoles publiques de langue française à Toronto;

« Attendu que le Toronto District School Board a déclaré que l'école Essex West school et le Toronto West collegiate institute ne sont pas nécessaires à leurs fins dans le sens du règlement 444 de la Loi sur l'éducation encadrant l'aliénation de biens immeubles excédentaires;

« Attendu que le Conseil scolaire Viamonde a déclaré son intérêt à se prévaloir de la priorité que lui accorde le règlement 444 pour acquérir ces propriétés;

« Attendu que le ministère de l'Éducation de l'Ontario a confirmé à maintes reprises, au cours de la dernière décennie, que des fonds étaient disponibles pour que le conseil puisse acquérir de nouvelles écoles aussitôt que des édifices adéquats seraient disponibles;

« Nous, soussignés, membres de la communauté francophone et francophile du grand Toronto, adressons à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario la pétition suivante :

« Que le gouvernement de l'Ontario respecte les garanties données au conseil par son ministère de l'Éducation et permette l'achat par le conseil des édifices du Essex West school et du Toronto West collegiate institute dans le respect de l'esprit et de la lettre du règlement 444 de la Loi sur l'éducation de l'Ontario ».

Je suis d'accord et je soussigne et donne la pétition à Jonah.

PARAMEDICS

Mr. Jeff Leal: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas paramedics play a vital role in protecting the health and safety of Ontarians; and

"Whereas paramedics often put their own health and safety at risk, going above and beyond their duty in servicing Ontarians; and

"Whereas the government of Ontario annually recognizes police officers and firefighters with awards for bravery; and

"Whereas currently no award for paramedic bravery is awarded by the government of Ontario; and

"Whereas Ontario paramedics deserve recognition for acts of exceptional bravery while protecting Ontarians;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Enact Bill 115, a private member's bill introduced by MPP Maria Van Bommel on October 6, 2010, An Act to provide for the Ontario Award for Paramedic Bravery."

I agree with this petition and will affix my signature to it.

DOG OWNERSHIP

Mrs. Julia Munro: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas aggressive dogs are found among all breeds and mixed breeds; and

"Breed-specific legislation has been shown to be an expensive and ineffective approach to dog bite prevention; and

"Problem dog owners are best dealt with through education, training and legislation encouraging responsible behaviour;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To repeal the breed-specific sections of the Dog Owners' Liability Act (2005) and to implement legislation that encourages responsible ownership of all dog breeds and types."

As I am in favour of this, I will affix my signature and give it to page Jonah.

PARAMEDICS

Ms. Helena Jaczek: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas paramedics play a vital role in protecting the health and safety of Ontarians; and

"Whereas paramedics often put their own health and safety at risk, going above and beyond their duty in servicing Ontarians; and

"Whereas the government of Ontario annually recognizes police officers and firefighters with awards for bravery; and

"Whereas currently no award for paramedic bravery is awarded by the government of Ontario; and

"Whereas Ontario paramedics deserve recognition for acts of exceptional bravery while protecting Ontarians;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Enact Bill 115, a private member's bill introduced by MPP Maria Van Bommel on October 6, 2010, An Act to provide for the Ontario Award for Paramedic Bravery."

As I agree with this petition, I will sign it and send it to the table with page Jonathan.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS TREATMENT

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas thousands of people suffer from multiple sclerosis;

"Whereas there is a treatment for chronic cerebrospinal venous insufficiency, more commonly called CCSVI, which consists of a corrective angioplasty, a well-known and universally practised procedure that is low-risk and at relatively low expense;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Minister of Health agrees to proceed with clinical trials of the venoplasty treatment to fully explore its potential to bring relief to the thousands of Ontarians afflicted with multiple sclerosis."

I'm pleased to sign it and give it to Rachel to give to the table.

PHOTO IDENTIFICATION

Mr. Bob Delaney: I have a petition addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly, and I would like to thank Stephanie Gunther from Roehampton Avenue in Toronto for having mailed it to me. It reads as follows:

"Whereas many seniors, visually impaired persons and other non-drivers do not need or are not eligible for a driver's licence; and

"Whereas many day-to-day transactions such as cashing of cheques; opening a new bank account at a financial institution; returning merchandise to a retail store; boarding a domestic flight; gaining admittance to bars, clubs and casinos; checking in at a hotel; obtaining a credit card, and even renting a video require government-issued photo identification; and

"Whereas Ontario's Photo Card Act, 2008, sets the legislative framework required to deliver a non-licence photo identification;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the province of Ontario develop a government-issued photo identification card and deliver, in 2011, an Ontario photo card identification for residents of the province over the age of 16 who cannot or choose not to drive."

I completely agree with this petition and I'm pleased to affix my signature to it and to send it to the table with page Benjamin.

RURAL SCHOOLS

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: "Petition to Save Moonstone Public School and All Other Rural Schools in Simcoe North.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Moonstone public school is an important part of Oro-Medonte township and the surrounding area; and

"Whereas Moonstone public school is widely recognized for its high educational standards and intimate learning experience; and

"Whereas the frameworks of rural schools are different from urban schools and therefore deserve to be governed by a separate rural school policy; and

"Whereas Dalton McGuinty promised during the 2007 election that he would keep rural schools open when he declared that, 'Rural schools help keep communities strong, which is why we're not only committed to keeping them open—but strengthening them'; and

"Whereas Dalton McGuinty found \$12 million to keep school swimming pools open in Toronto but hasn't found any money to keep rural schools open;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Premier Dalton McGuinty and the Minister of Education support the citizens of Simcoe North and suspend the Simcoe County District School Board ARC 2010:01 until the province develops a rural school policy that recognizes the value of schools in the rural communities of Ontario."

I'm pleased to sign this and give it to Maggy to present to the table.

PARAMEDICS

Mr. Joe Dickson: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas paramedics play a vital role in protecting the health and safety of Ontarians; and

"Whereas paramedics often put their own health and safety at risk, going above and beyond their duty in servicing Ontarians; and

"Whereas the government of Ontario annually recognizes police officers and firefighters with awards for bravery; and

"Whereas currently no award for paramedic bravery is awarded by the government of Ontario; and

"Whereas Ontario paramedics deserve recognition for acts of exceptional bravery while protecting Ontarians;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Enact Bill 115, a private member's bill introduced by MPP Maria Van Bommel on October 6, 2010, An Act to provide for the Ontario Award for Paramedic Bravery."

I agree with the petition. I will attach my signature to it and pass it to page John.

PROTECTION OF MINORS

Mr. John O'Toole: I'm pleased to present this petition. It's more important that the Minister of Children and Youth Services is here, and the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services is here as well. I read this petition on behalf of my constituent, whose name is Michael Colligan. It reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas many magazine displayed at store checkout counters have messages and images not suitable for children; and

"Whereas some of the messages in some of these publications promote topics such as unhealthy body images, outrageous lifestyles and degradation of women; and

"Whereas this material at checkout counters is clearly visible to underage readers," with their parents often;

"Therefore, be it resolved that the Ontario Legislature support action to require the removal of magazines unfit for young readers from checkout counters, that this reading material with mature content be displayed less prominently and that the checkout counters be reserved for the display of magazines and reading material that is" more appropriate "and family-friendly."

I'm pleased to sign it, support it and present it to one of the pages, Benjamin.

1550

PARAMEDICS

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas paramedics play a vital role in protecting the health and safety of Ontarians; and

"Whereas paramedics often put their own health and safety at risk, going above and beyond their duty in servicing Ontarians; and

"Whereas the government of Ontario annually recognizes police officers and firefighters with awards for bravery; and

"Whereas currently no award for paramedic bravery is awarded by the government of Ontario; and

"Whereas Ontario paramedics deserve recognition for acts of exceptional bravery while protecting Ontarians;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Enact Bill 115, a private member's bill introduced by MPP Maria Van Bommel on October 6, 2010, An Act to provide for the Ontario Award for Paramedic Bravery."

I agree with this petition, affix my signature and send it to the table via page Jonathan.

TAXATION

Mr. John O'Toole: Again, I'm pleased to present a petition. This will be on behalf of the three municipalities in my riding: Uxbridge, Scugog and Clarington. The petition reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario government's projected new revenue from the harmonized sales tax (HST) on gasoline and diesel will create an estimated \$1.5 billion" in revenue per year to the province of Ontario; and

"Whereas there is a lack of funding for essential transportation construction, maintenance and rehabilitation among Ontario's municipalities," many of them rural; and

"Whereas over 100 municipalities representing more than four million Ontarians have endorsed a resolution from the CAA," the Canadian Automobile Association, in southern Ontario "and the Ontario Good Roads Association calling for the" McGuinty "government of Ontario to dedicate a portion of the HST gas tax revenue to transportation;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, ask that if the provincial government insists on collecting HST at the gas pumps, that a portion of this added revenue be allocated to a new, predictable funding mechanism that will help Ontario municipalities invest in transportation infrastructure" in their community, as they see fit.

I'm pleased to sign it, support it and present it to Maggy, one of the pages on her last day here.

CELLULAR TOWERS

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: I've got a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads:

"Whereas a cellular communications tower is proposed to be built in the vicinity of Third Line and Rebecca Street in Oakville;

"Whereas Industry Canada has ultimate authority to approve the location of cellular communications towers under the federal Radiocommunication Act;

"Whereas the province of Ontario has no jurisdiction in the placement of cell towers;

"Whereas the town of Oakville has very limited jurisdiction in the placement of cell towers; and

"Whereas many area residents and local elected officials have expressed concerns with the proposed location and proximity to residential areas;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the province of Ontario request that the government of Canada grant municipalities the right to have enhanced participation in the placement of cellular communications towers in residential areas; and

"That the province of Ontario request that the government of Canada place a moratorium on the construction

of cellular towers within 500 metres of residential homes until the implementation of an improved municipal approval process."

I agree with this, will sign it and send it down with Rachel.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ELECTORAL REFORM

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Orders of the day?

Hon. Gerry Phillips: Government notice of motion number 77.

The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Todd Decker): Government notice of motion number 77. Mr. Bentley.

Mr. Peter Kormos: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I refer to standing order 23(e), the rule against anticipation. One of the interesting things in Ontario's standing orders, of course, is that unlike the federal standing orders, the standing orders of Parliament, which do not contain the codification of the rule against anticipation, the Ontario standing orders do have a codification of the rule against anticipation, and I'm going to explain in just a minute why I believe that's significant.

I want to put this in context, please. I first refer to *The Procedure of the House of Commons: A Study of its History and Present Form*, Josef Redlich, page 221:

"The so-called rule against anticipation has never been embodied in any of the standing orders of the House but is part of the common law or usage of the House. There is some obscurity about its origin and about the precise date of its first formulation. The earliest edition of May's *Parliamentary Practice* in which there is any express reference to it appears to be that of 1871, but it is evident from Mr. Speaker Denison's rulings that the rule had been recognized and acted upon for many years before that date."

So, as I say, this was in effect a common-law rule, a parliamentary rule, in the British House of Commons.

Next, in terms of developing an understanding of the rule against anticipation—as I say, unlike the federal standing orders, in the provincial standing orders the rule against anticipation is codified. In *Ersine May*, 23rd edition, at page 389, there is a reference to the rule against anticipation. The reference notes that, "Formerly, the House strictly observed a rule against anticipation according to which a motion could not anticipate a matter already appointed for consideration by the House, whether it were a bill or an adjourned debate upon a motion. The rule survives in standing order no. 28"—of course, this is referring to the British Parliament's, Westminster's, standing orders—"which requires that in determining whether a discussion is out of order on the ground of anticipation the Speaker must have regard to the probability of the matter anticipated being brought before the House within a reasonable time." That's an important

consideration here too, because that is repeated in at least one other reference, certainly Beauchesne.

"Stated generally, the rule against anticipation (which applied to other proceedings as well as motions), as strictly enforced in earlier times, was that a matter must not be anticipated if it were contained in a more effective form of proceeding than the proceeding by which it was sought to be anticipated, but it might be anticipated if it were contained in an equally less effective form. A bill or other order of the day is more effective than a motion, a substantive motion more effective than a motion for the adjournment of the House or an amendment, and a motion for the adjournment is more effective than a supplementary question."

I'll leave the references for a moment and get to what we have before us right now. We have today's motion, which is government notice of motion number 77. I put to you that the gut, the gist of the motion, is addressing corrupt acts in the course of elections, and then defines those, at least in part, "such as misleading phone calls and other attempts to prevent individuals from voting in elections...." Hmm. Because we also have before the House on the order paper Bill 196, presented for first reading yesterday. Bill 196 is a very compact bill. It addresses corrupt acts in the course of elections and specifically makes reference to the context or the purpose for which misleading phone calls are made and other attempts to prevent individuals from voting in elections.

It's interesting to note that all of Bill 196 addresses or amends nothing other than the part of the Ontario Election Act that is titled "Corrupt Practices and Other Offences: Penalties and Enforcement." So Bill 196 is restricted to amending that part of the Election Act that addresses corrupt practices. That, I believe, is significant here in terms of understanding whether these are sufficiently similar such that the debate on the motion would anticipate the subject matter of the bill.

I put to you, sir, that the reference that I made to Erskine May that talked about a bill trumping a motion is entirely relevant here. That's what May says: that a bill is a more powerful, more potent parliamentary process than is the passage of a resolution, which, of course, isn't binding on anybody, and sometimes isn't even persuasive, and in the context of this resolution, really says nothing.

I don't want to draw unfair inferences, but I suspect that the government didn't have anything else to call today were it not for this motion that appears to have been concocted late in the day yesterday—the order paper is rather sparse—which goes to the probability of the bill being called in relatively short order.

1600

The order paper is common knowledge. There's not very much left on the order paper, Speaker. Everything that's there at this point is tied up, in large part, in committee and will be returned to this House in relatively short order. So I submit to you, sir, that you can infer that this bill, Bill 196, the amendments to the Election Act—the sections of the Election Act beginning with section

90, "Corrupt Practices and Other Offences: Penalties and Enforcement"—will be called reasonably soon.

I just want to take you very quickly now, because I don't want to use up a lot of your time, to Beauchesne, which has some very significant comments on this particular scenario. I refer to Beauchesne, sixth edition, page 154, starting with paragraph 512:

"(1) The rule of anticipation, a rule which forbids discussion of a matter standing on the order paper from being forestalled, is dependent upon the same principle as that which forbids the same question from being raised twice within the same session.

"(2) The rule against anticipation is that a matter must not be anticipated if it is contained in a more effective form of proceeding than the proceeding by which it is sought to be anticipated"—I interrupt the quote here for a minute; a more effective form, the bill as compared to the resolution—"but it may be anticipated if it is contained in an equally or less effective form." That's not the case here.

"(3) The British practice in reference to this rule is sufficiently clear; the same cannot be said about Canadian precedents where attempts have been made to apply the rule to our own Canadian practice."

The government House leader, I'm sure, will want to seize on that. She'll want to take that and light it like a torch and hold it flaming above her head.

Beauchesne then says, "The difficulty stems from the fact that the British Commons' standing orders include a specific rule on this subject." Parliament's standing orders appear not to; however, Ontario's do.

Hon. John Wilkinson: We're in Ontario.

Mr. Peter Kormos: As the minister says, we are in Ontario. We're in Ontario's Parliament. Specifically, standing order 23(e): "A member shall be called to order by the Speaker if he or she ... anticipates any matter already on the Orders and Notices paper for consideration."

Finally, we go to the New Testament, O'Brien and Bosc's House of Commons Procedure and Practice, second edition, page 560, "The rule of anticipation."

"According to this rule, which applied to other proceedings as well as to motions, a motion could not anticipate a matter which was standing on the order paper for further discussion, whether as a bill or a motion, and which was contained in a more effective form of proceeding....

"While the rule of anticipation is part of the standing orders in the British House of Commons, it has never been so in the Canadian House of Commons. Furthermore, references to past attempts to apply this British rule to Canadian practice are inconclusive"—inconclusive.

However, once again, the authors of Ontario's standing orders have seen fit to include the rule against anticipation in standing order 23(e).

So I put to you that it is incumbent upon the Speaker to, first, determine whether the rule of anticipation prevails in this Parliament. I submit that it does, (1), because

of the common law, and (2), because of the codification of the common law in standing order 23(e).

Second, I put to you that it's incumbent upon the Speaker to determine whether the facts here permit the application of the rule of anticipation.

I submit to you that the bill is narrow, in that it applies only to the part of the Ontario Election Act that addresses corruption, and the resolution put forward in notice of motion number 77 is similarly narrow and again is speaking specifically of the very same things that the amendments in Bill 196 speak to; that is, misleading phone calls and other attempts to prevent individuals from voting in elections. Indeed, section 3 of the bill amends the Election Act by saying, "A person who, inside or outside Ontario, prevents another person from voting"—bang on with the resolution. The overall theme is one which—the statute—would prohibit misleading phone calls; that is to say, impersonation, again contained in Bill 196.

I put to you that Bill 196 and notice of motion number 77 overlap not just partially but so significantly that this is a case where the more potent process, the bill, is being anticipated by the motion. There's not even some likelihood but there's no doubt about the fact of this bill being called in relatively short order.

You were hearing—and of course, it's part of Hansard—the comments of the Attorney General when he introduced the bill and when he spoke to it during ministerial statements. Again, the clear inference to be drawn was that the government has presented it so it could pass this legislation in anticipation of the upcoming October 6 election.

It's an interesting point. I was referred to three Hansard references of interesting people like Ian Deans and Mike Breough, who, of course, handled these standing orders pretty well in their own right in their own day—very well, as a matter of fact. Unfortunately, as I read the Hansards, I realized that those fact situations were so removed from this one that I submit that they're of no value. I don't refer to them.

I find this interesting. With great anticipation, I look forward to your ruling, sir.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'd like to submit, on behalf of the official opposition, our concurrence with the third party House leader that this motion ought to be ruled out of order. He has done an eloquent job of using his experience and his resources to cite so many parliamentary studies, reports and examples.

I would like to use just a simple one in this Legislature. As many of us know, when we submit our private members' business, if that bill has already been submitted, it is ruled out of order. In this case, it would appear, given the motion that was tabled yesterday, as well as the bill that was tabled yesterday, that they are trying to achieve the same thing. I think, given, as my colleague opposite has stated, that a bill does take precedence over a motion, that this motion ought then to be ruled out of order.

In the standing orders, you do have an ability to rule on whether this motion is in order or not. I suggest that

you consider the arguments made by my colleague, supported by the official opposition.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Speaker, I apologize. I neglected to mention that the author of the bill is the Honourable C. Bentley and the mover of the motion is also the Honourable C. Bentley: yet another nexus between the bill and the motion.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this point of order brought by the member for Welland. As always, he hasn't had an opportunity to speak for a couple of weeks, so we anticipated that we would get a point of order, however weak it may be, and we appreciate the opportunity to have a discussion about this today.

As you know, we have before us a suggestion that the motion that we are about to call in some way is counter to standing order 23(e), which reads—member for Trinity-Spadina, pull out your standing orders—"In debate, a member shall be called to order by the Speaker if he or she...."

"(e) Anticipates any matter already on the Orders and Notices paper for consideration."

I think the nub of the argument this afternoon is whether Bill 196, which is on the order paper, is in fact the same matter as is outlined in our government motion 77, which has just been called to debate. I would argue that they are not.

The motion to be debated this afternoon expresses condemnation of the alleged corrupt acts that took place during the federal election. We've all heard about them, we've read about them and we want to make sure that such things do not happen in upcoming provincial elections. It "condemns acts of election fraud, such as misleading phone calls and other attempts to prevent individuals from voting in elections."

I would anticipate that my colleagues in this House would agree with me that we do not want to allow for any kind of corrupt acts to take place during a provincial election, and we certainly want to express our condemnation of those acts.

1610

Further, the motion confirms the Legislative Assembly of Ontario's resolve that electors in the upcoming provincial election should be free to cast their ballots without any such interference. Minister Bentley's bill, in contrast—Bill 196—"amends the Election Act to add new sections 96.2 and 96.3. Section 96.2 prohibits interference with voting. Section 96.3 prohibits impersonation of electoral officials, candidates and persons authorized to act of behalf of candidates, parties and constituency associations."

None of those are referenced in the motion that we are debating this afternoon. We are condemning election fraud and misleading phone calls, but we are in no way calling for the prohibition of impersonation of electoral officials—a distinguishing feature between the act and the motion that I think is very clear.

"Several offences under the act, including the ones described in new sections 96.2 and 96.3, constitute

'corrupt practices' if committed knowingly. The existing penalty for a person who is found guilty of a corrupt practice is a fine of not more than \$5,000, imprisonment for a term of not more than six months, or both. The maximum fine for a corrupt practice is increased to \$25,000 and the maximum term of imprisonment to two years less a day."

Standing order 23(e) states that in debate a member shall be called to order by the Speaker, as I noted earlier, if he or she "anticipates any matter already on the Orders and Notices paper for consideration." The motion does not anticipate the proposed amendments to the Election Act outlined in Bill 196; it simply references alleged corrupt acts and the condemnation of election fraud and gives a couple of examples.

They are very distinguishable, as are many cases, and I would note that the member for Welland did fail to raise with us any precedent that was on point with this. He did reference, of course, as is his wont, a number of texts, and I look forward to the day where I no longer have to refer to Beauchesne—not that I don't appreciate his good work.

But I would bring to your attention the work of O'Brien and Bosc, and as usual, my colleague the member for Welland has only quoted part of the section on the rule of anticipation, which gives me the opportunity to share with you the entire submission on the rule of anticipation, which is on page 560. I'm sure Mr. Speaker will want the full context of this.

"The moving of a motion was formerly subject to the ancient"—perhaps reflective of some points of view of the member for Welland—"rule of anticipation"—

Mr. Peter Kormos: You're not exactly a teenager—

Hon. Monique M. Smith: So much younger than you, my friend; so much younger than you—"which is no longer strictly observed."

I'd just like to emphasize that for you, Mr. Speaker. O'Brien and Bosc clearly indicate that the moving of a motion of this ancient rule of anticipation is no longer strictly observed—according to O'Brien and Bosc, who of course are the experts who have been referred to by the member for Welland.

"According to this rule, which applied to other proceedings as well as to motions, a motion could not anticipate a matter which was standing on the order paper for further discussion, whether as a bill or a motion, and which was contained in a more effective form of proceeding (for example, a bill or any other order of the day is more effective than a motion, which in turn has priority over an amendment, which in turn is more effective than a written or oral question). If such a motion were allowed, it could indeed forestall or block a decision from being taken on the matter already on the order paper.

"While the rule of anticipation is part of the standing orders in the British House of Commons, it has never been so in the Canadian House of Commons. Furthermore, references to past attempts to apply this British rule to Canadian practices are inconclusive.

"The rule"—

Mr. Peter Kormos: That's exactly what I said.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: You did. But let me continue. "The rule is dependent on the principle"—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Let her finish, please.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do believe we listened quite attentively to the member for Welland.

"The rule is dependent on the principle which forbids the same question from being decided twice within the same session. It does not apply, however, to similar or identical motions or bills which appear on the notice paper prior to debate. The rule of anticipation becomes operative only when one of two similar motions on the order paper is actually proceeded with. For example, two bills similar in substance will be allowed to stand on the order paper but only one may be moved and disposed of. If the first bill is withdrawn (by unanimous consent, often after debate has started), the second may be proceeded with."

I note, Mr. Speaker, that we are just starting debate on this motion. There is no indication at this point in time that it will be disposed of today, and we would not be precluded from moving forward with the bill were it to be found similar enough to invoke standing order 23(e).

I go back to my quotation: "A point of order regarding anticipation may be raised when the second motion"—therefore, this point of order may be untimely. "A point of order regarding anticipation may be raised when the second motion is proposed from the Chair, if the first has already been proposed to the House and has become an order of the day.

"An exception has been allowed, however, in the case of an opposition motion on a supply day related to the subject matter of a bill already before the House," which is not appropriate in this particular circumstance.

To summarize, I would indicate a couple of things:

(1) This is an ancient rule.

(2) It is rarely applied.

(3) It would only become applicable if both the motion and the piece of legislation were similar enough to be comparable, and in this case I would argue they are not.

(4) I would argue, as I have in the past and as I always like to end in this particular circumstance when referring to the member from Welland, that he has in fact, and has proudly stated that he has in fact violated every one of the standing orders, particularly those in section 23.

This would not be the first case where this House would see perhaps a slight transgression on section 23(e) and, as noted in the esteemed Bosc and O'Brien, that is actually accepted in most Houses of Parliament.

I would argue today that the motion we are putting forward today and that we would like to debate today condemns the alleged corrupt acts that took place during the federal election and argues against election fraud and lists a few examples of that, while our piece of legislation is very clear in wanting to prohibit interference with

voting and prohibit impersonation of electoral officers, candidates and persons, and provides penalties that are relevant to those types of corrupt acts which, I would argue, are a corruption of democracy.

I actually find it kind of surprising today that my colleague would be precluding us from debating something that I would think he would agree with wholeheartedly, and that is precluding the abuses of the process in the electoral process and condemning corrupt acts that would somehow corrupt our electoral process, which is so important and dear to the people of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Welland.

Mr. Peter Kormos: A brief reply, and I don't want to appear overly pedagogical or pedantic, but I must. The government House leader reads page 560 and she's entirely correct; I want her to know that. I want to acknowledge that, because it's clear that the rule does not apply "to similar identical motions or bills which appear on the notice paper prior to debate." The two can coexist on the order paper until the cows come home. "The rule of anticipation becomes operative only when one of two similar motions on the order paper is actually proceeded with." It's what's happening today. The fact that it's called, that it's being proceeded with, invokes the rule.

We're going to go through this until somebody gets it: "Two bills similar in substance will be allowed to stand ... but only one may be moved and disposed of. If the first bill is withdrawn, the second may be proceeded with. If a decision is taken on the first bill, the other may not be proceeded with. A point of order regarding anticipation may be raised when the second motion is proposed from the Chair, if the first has already been proposed to the House and has become an order of the day."

You see, an order is being called today. The problem is that the federal Parliament does not have a standing order that codifies the rule of anticipation, the rule against anticipation; our Parliament does. There can be no other explanation for 23 other than that it's a codification of the rule of anticipation. I appreciate the government House leader's attempt to guide me through the English text, and I welcome any assistance that I can be offered, but I'm afraid her argument indeed confirms what I've proposed.

One distinct difference: You see, here Bosc and O'Brien don't talk about the hierarchy, bill trumping motion. They talk about motion and motion, bill and bill. The text, for whatever reason, doesn't refer to the hierarchy. Here we've got that interesting little angle of the hierarchy, the bill being a more potent vehicle than the motion and thus having superiority.

I'm not going to say any more other than to tell you that, again, I eagerly await your ruling.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I am informed by the chief official opposition whip that the actual piece of legislation we were to have debated this afternoon, according to the orders of the day, was in fact Bill 196, put forward and introduced by the Attorney General, Chris Bentley. It

was on the Legislative Assembly's orders of the day. As a result of a reasoned amendment that we put forward, that was taken off and this was inserted—this motion, this legislation, was put forward by the exact same member.

So to my colleague in the third party's point of order, I would humbly suggest that this motion is out of order, given those reasons.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I thank the member from Welland, the member from Nepean–Carleton and the government House leader for their comments on this point of order. While I have to admit that I may have anticipated that this matter might be raised today, I will admit that this certainly is, as has been laid out, a complex issue, and I'm therefore going to recess the House for one half-hour to consider the matter.

The House recessed from 1621 to 1742.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member for Welland, Mr. Kormos, has risen on a point of order to the effect that the calling of government notice of motion 77, which was filed yesterday, anticipates consideration of Bill 196, which was introduced earlier in the day yesterday and which now awaits second reading consideration. The member for Nepean–Carleton, Ms. MacLeod, and the government House leader, Ms. Smith, also made submissions on the matter.

I have had the opportunity to reflect on the submissions and to review our precedents and authorities on anticipation.

Standing order 23(e) provides as follows: "In debate, a member shall be called to order by the Speaker if he or she ... [a]nticipates any matter already on the Orders and Notices paper for consideration."

Since there appears to be some confusion, let me begin by explaining what the meaning of the rule of anticipation is. The rule, as it exists in parliamentary tradition, is intended to prevent a matter that is already set down in the order paper for consideration—in this case, Bill 196—from being debated in a different or less effective proceeding—in this case, government notice of motion 77.

The purpose of the rule is to prevent the time of the House from being wasted and to mitigate the potential for conflicting decisions. The rule goes hand in hand with the rule that prevents a motion from being proposed once the subject has already been decided upon. For example, if a motion that is on a substantially similar subject as a bill set down for future consideration is decided upon, it is possible that the House could not then proceed with the bill.

With respect to the rule of anticipation in this House, the member for Welland is correct, in that we have codified what in some other jurisdictions is an ancient convention. However, as far as I can determine, no Speaker of this assembly appears to have rigorously applied standing order 23(e) in order to rule consideration of business out of order. I think that the reason for the dearth of Ontario rulings on anticipation is that Speakers prefer to adopt the approach that, to paraphrase standing

order 1(b), accentuates members' abilities to submit motions and bills, and to then debate, speak to and vote on them.

Moreover, if the rule were to be interpreted strictly, the Speaker would have to apply the same principles to all business, be it government business, opposition business or private members' business. I suspect that some of the business that the House has considered in the past would be out of order under a strict regime.

Further, members—and I would encourage this—may want to seriously consider the unanticipated ripple effect that could result from the desire to see the rule of anticipation rigorously applied. Doing so could very well upset the delicate balance of this House.

That the rule exists, there is no question. However, before it can be invoked, the Speaker must determine whether government motion 77 calls on the House to decide substantially the same question it will be asked to decide with respect to Bill 196.

The motion, if passed, would express the condemnation of the House for various alleged transgressions that occurred during polling in the May 2 federal election, and further expresses the determination of the House that similar transgressions do not occur in our own upcoming election. The bill amends the Election Act to provide penalties for various corrupt practices. There is no question that there is a linkage between these two elements, and that the debate on the motion and the debate on the bill will likely produce similar speeches. But ultimately the House will be asked to decide two different questions. Though they are thematically similar, they are not the same. In this sense, the motion does not offend the anticipation rule or standing order 52.

But, finally, let me add that the government could and should have structured its business entirely differently, so as to avoid this procedural issue entirely. After all—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Government House leader, I'd appreciate you listening, please.

I'm going to repeat this: Finally, let me add that the government could and should have structured its business differently, so as to avoid this procedural issue entirely. After all, what is in play here are two closely related items of government business that emerged within hours of each other. It strikes me that more effective use could be made of the time of the House.

I thank the member for Welland, the member for Nepean—Carleton and the government House leader for their submissions on this point of order.

Minister without portfolio.

Hon. Gerry Phillips: I move that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario condemns the alleged corrupt acts that took place during the federal election and condemns acts of election fraud, such as misleading phone calls and other attempts to prevent individuals from voting in elections and confirms its resolve that electors in the upcoming provincial election should be free to cast their ballots without any such interference.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Mr. Phillips has moved government notice of motion number 77. Debate?

Mr. David Zimmer: I'm delighted to be able to speak to this motion, which really deals with the whole issue of—when you look at the motion, read it over and reflect on just what it means, in a word or two it's all about preventing voter suppression. I read the motion again carefully: "That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario condemns the alleged corrupt acts that took place during the federal election and condemns acts of election fraud, such as misleading phone calls and other attempts to prevent individuals from voting in elections and confirms its resolve that electors in the upcoming provincial election should be free to cast their ballots without any such interference."

The motion asks this House to recognize, by way of adopting this resolution, that we stand by that principle that the voter who chooses to exercise their right to vote, in this case in the provincial election, can exercise that and vote for whomever they want. They can vote for a Conservative. They can vote NDP. They can vote Green. They can vote Liberal. But that is their absolute right.

1750

There is a history of voter suppression that we're probably all aware of. When I walk you through some of the most egregious examples, perhaps, in other jurisdictions, it poses the question in my mind of why anybody in this chamber, be he or she Liberal, NDP or Conservative, would oppose or vote against a motion which says that this chamber is opposed to any form of voter suppression.

I happened to watch a film the other night—I guess about a week ago—an American film called *Mississippi Burning*. It is one of the icon films of the American civil rights movement, particularly in the 1960s. What that film was all about was the efforts of the federal government and other governments to assist voters in dealing with the voter suppression that was rampant in certain parts of the United States.

What was the form of that voter suppression? The strategy behind voter suppression was to interfere with the voter's right to go freely to a place to cast their vote. Why did certain groups want to, for whatever reason, suppress the voters or prevent voters from exercising their right to vote? Because they were afraid that certain voters were going to vote one way or vote the other way on an issue. That interference—trying to prevent a voter from freely wanting to cast their vote in a direction to the left or a direction to the right or a direction to the middle—is an affront to democracy. I dare say that everybody in this House, on this side of the House and on that side of the House, when they examine their conscience on this issue—I just can't comprehend anyone voting against a motion that says, "We, as a House, are going to do everything we can to condemn, in any way, voter suppression."

It's in all parties' interests in this chamber, be they Liberal, Conservative or NDP, to see that everybody freely exercises their vote and that there are no extraneous circumstances that interfere with that right, whether it's some mechanism to send people to the wrong polling

station or some form of intimidation to encourage them to stay home or to cast their vote one way or another. There are jurisdictions throughout the world—and we see examples of that this very day as I am speaking. Throughout the Middle East, where, after years and years and years of living in regimes where the essence of the regime was voter suppression—all kinds of mechanisms to prevent voters from casting a vote or encouraging them or putting pressure on them to cast a vote in this way or that way. We have extreme examples of that, where you used to read in some jurisdictions where there was an election and the governing party that won the election got 99.9% of the vote. That's an extreme example of voter suppression.

In other jurisdictions—and it's relevant now because in the Middle East, people are risking their lives so that they can express themselves. They can encourage their governments to have open elections. They're prepared to risk life and limb for that right to cast a vote.

I go back to the American civil rights movement in the 1960s. If any of you have seen that film, *Mississippi Burning*, it got really right into the nitty-gritty of what this motion is about. There were corrupt acts that took place during the elections to interfere with the right to vote: misleading phone calls, threatening phone calls and all manner of attempts to prevent individuals from voting in the elections and freely casting their ballot.

There's a whole generation of people who put themselves at risk to ensure that there would not be voter suppression. We see it all through the Middle East today. In fact, going back several hundreds of years—the English Civil War, the French Revolution, the American Civil War, the suffragette movement, particularly in the west or in England and Canada and the US; there were women who wanted to cast a vote. First, they wanted to get the vote, and they had a terrible fight. They finally got the vote. Then, if you read the history books of that period, 1917—1900 to about 1920, there were all sorts of

nefarious acts to suppress the vote: threatening phone calls and pressures and family pressures and misleading statements to interfere with the right of women to cast their vote as they decided. Governments fought hard for voters, be they men or women or whoever, so that they could freely exercise their vote.

All this motion says today is that in view of the bad things, awful things that went on throughout the last federal election a couple of weeks ago, it's incumbent upon this House to have the courage to stand up and, in effect, renew or recognize afresh its commitment to the voters of Ontario to cast their vote however they want to, free of undue influence, and to eliminate any possibility of voter suppression. People may want to cast their vote for the left, for the right or for the centre. The point is, that's their right, and they should have the right to do that without interference.

So I say to the members opposite, I say to the members of my own caucus, how, when the question is posed that way, can you possibly cast a vote against a motion that renews this chamber's collective commitment to stamping out voter suppression? That's the heart of our democracy, and we as democrats, we as people living in a free society, we as people who base our governance on the result of free elections in the fullest sense of the word—I say to the members opposite, whether they be in the third party, the official opposition or, indeed, my own party members, how can you possibly go on record as voting against a motion that says we're all renewing our pledge to free, unencumbered elections? We will not stand for any form of voter suppression.

Debate deemed adjourned.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Well.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Your clock looks a little fast—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): It being close to 6 of the clock—oh, it's very close—this House is adjourned until 9 a.m. of the clock Thursday, May 19, 2011.

The House adjourned at 1758.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Steve Peters

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman, Tonia Grannum

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Aggelonitis, Hon. / L'hon. Sophia (LIB)	Hamilton Mountain	Minister of Revenue / Ministre du Revenu Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Arthurs, Wayne (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (LIB)	London West / London-Ouest	Attorney General / Procureur général Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Health Promotion and Sport / Ministre de la Promotion de la santé et du Sport
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Brown, Michael A. (LIB)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Brownell, Jim (LIB)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Caplan, David (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Carroll, Hon. / L'hon. Aileen (LIB)	Barrie	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism and Culture / Ministre du Tourisme et de la Culture
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Crozier, Bruce (LIB)	Essex	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
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Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie

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Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
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Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
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Hampton, Howard (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
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Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Hoy, Pat (LIB)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
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Kormos, Peter (NDP)	Welland	Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
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Levac, Dave (LIB)	Brant	
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Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
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Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	
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Moridi, Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	

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Naqvi, Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
Orazietti, David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pendergast, Leeanna (LIB)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (LIB)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (LIB)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Economic Development and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Ramal, Khalil (LIB)	London–Fanshawe	
Ramsay, David (LIB)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Ruprecht, Tony (LIB)	Davenport	
Sandals, Liz (LIB)	Guelph	
Savoline, Joyce (PC)	Burlington	
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
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Sorbara, Greg (LIB)	Vaughan	
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Sterling, Norman W. (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	Deputy Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de parti reconnu
Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Van Bommel, Maria (LIB)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
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Vacant	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	

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Rick Johnson, Sylvia Jones
Jean-Marc Lalonde, Ted McMeekin
Shafiq Qaadri, Khalil Ramal
Elizabeth Witmer
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No. 124



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**Legislative Assembly
of Ontario**

Second Session, 39th Parliament



**Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario**

Deuxième session, 39^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

Thursday 19 May 2011

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Jeudi 19 mai 2011

Speaker
Honourable Steve Peters

Clerk
Deborah Deller

Président
L'honorable Steve Peters

Greffière
Deborah Deller

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 19 May 2011

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 19 mai 2011

The House met at 0900.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Good morning. Please remain standing for the Lord's Prayer, followed by a moment of silence for inner thought and personal reflection.

Prayers.

LEGISLATIVE INTERNS

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd like to explain to the members that this morning, I am not Mr. Speaker; I am Mr. Sneaker. I am wearing a pair of purple Chuck Taylor Converse All Stars. As many of you know, I collect the shoes, and as the honourable member from Wexford knows, there's nothing clear in the standing orders as far as apparel requirements within the chamber, so I took the advantage to wear these purple sneakers today.

But I want to thank the OLIP interns. These were a gift to me from the interns. They named me an honorary intern. The interns and their advisers are sitting in the Speaker's gallery today, and I just want to thank you for the great work that you have done in support of members on all sides of the House. I hope you've had an enjoyable time while you've been here.

On behalf of all the staff and all the members here at the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, we just want to wish you all the best in your future endeavours and thank you for the great work that you've done for us.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): If you'd just hold tight while I sit down, perhaps the camera will get a good shot for the record. I know it's not good, but I'll cross my legs and I can show off the wonderful little badge that the interns gave me. Wonderful red—I mean purple. They're actually gothic purple Converse, so thank you very much.

Now, to the business of the day.

NOTICE OF REASONED AMENDMENT

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I beg to inform the House that the member for Wellington—Halton Hills has filed notice of a reasoned amendment to the motion for second reading of Bill 196, An Act to amend the Election Act with respect to certain electoral practices. The order for second reading of Bill 196 may therefore not be called today.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TAXATION

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 16, 2011, on the amendment to the amendment to the motion by Ms. Smith on Ontario's tax plan for jobs and growth.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 18, I'm now required to put the question.

On May 16, Ms. Smith moved that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognizes that to make life easier for Ontario families and help our economy remain strong, Ontario's tax plan for jobs and growth, as reaffirmed in the 2011 budget, removes 90,000 Ontarians from the income tax rolls, provides 93% of Ontarians with a permanent personal income tax cut, maintains the harmonized sales tax at the current rate and provides \$12 billion in tax relief for families and \$4.8 billion in tax relief for businesses; and

Recognizes that with Ontario's tax plan for jobs and growth, the economy is turning the corner by creating more than 293,000 new jobs since the global recession; and

Rejects the introduction of a carbon tax as a measure that would hurt Ontario's economic growth; and

Rejects an increase to the HST rate or a decrease to the rate that would benefit the wealthiest Ontarians the most, take \$3 billion out of health care and education funding and harm Ontario's economic recovery.

Mr. Yakabuski then moved that the motion be amended as follows: by deleting all the words after "strong" in the first paragraph; deleting the second paragraph; substituting the word "it" for "and" at the beginning of the third paragraph; and deleting the words after "HST rate" in the last paragraph.

Mr. Chudleigh then moved that the amendment to the motion be amended as follows: by adding the following "or more hidden fees, or a revival of eco taxes planned by the McGuinty Liberals."

The first question to be decided is Mr. Chudleigh's amendment to the amendment. Is it the pleasure of the House that the amendment to the amendment carry?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

This vote will be deferred until after question period.

Vote deferred.

TIME ALLOCATION

Hon. Gerry Phillips: I move that, pursuant to standing order 47 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 179, An Act to amend the Child and Family Services Act respecting adoption and the provision of care and maintenance, the Standing Committee on Social Policy be authorized to meet at 4 p.m. on Tuesday, May 31, 2011, for the purpose of clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

That the deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the clerk of the committee shall be 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 31, 2011. On Tuesday, May 31, 2011, at no later than 5 p.m., those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved, and the Chair of the committee shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments thereto. Any division required shall be deferred until all remaining questions have been put and taken in succession, with one 20-minute waiting period allowed pursuant to standing order 129(a). The committee shall be authorized to meet beyond the normal hour of adjournment for clause-by-clause consideration on Tuesday, May 31, 2011; and

That the committee shall report the bill to the House no later than Wednesday, June 1, 2011. In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on that day, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House; and

That, upon receiving the report of the Standing Committee on Social Policy, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading, which order may be called that same day; and

That, when the order for third reading of the bill is called, one hour shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

That, except in the case of a recorded division arising from morning orders of the day, pursuant to standing order 9(c), no deferral of the third reading vote shall be permitted; and

That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Debate?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I'm pleased to rise to speak to this time allocation motion. For me, this time allocation motion is all about lack of planning. We have had lots of opportunity to raise the issue of Bill 179. The government chose to take seven and a half years, quite frankly, to bring forward any kind of substantive amendments relating to adoption, and what we're seeing this morning

as we discuss this time allocation motion is in fact a lack of planning, a lack of forward momentum, on behalf of the Liberal government.

0910

Bill 179 was introduced in the Ontario Legislature within the last month. We actually had a debate when we were discussing public hearings and public consultation because, as I'm sure you know, many members—all MPPs—have been receiving letters asking—pleading with us—to take a very close look at what Bill 179 is proposing and ensure that the public has the right to hear and offer input. While we were discussing when public input could take place, the initial proposal from the government was a mere two hours of public debate, which, as you know, ends up being fewer than 12 people in all of Ontario having the opportunity to share their thoughts, concerns and, quite frankly, praise for Bill 179.

We were successful in getting an additional day of public hearings, which we have now held. We have scheduled Bill 179 for clause-by-clause on Monday in social policy committee, which is actually four hours of debate and discussion. I don't think that bills on adoption—I don't think any new legislation—should be rushed through, but particularly when you're dealing with families, when you're dealing with children that we're trying to place in care in the most appropriate way.

What we're seeing today with this time allocation motion is an attempt by a government that really didn't plan ahead. They could have brought forward Bill 179 or an amendment to it a number of months ago. The report that we're basing a lot of the Bill 179 changes on has actually been tabled for over a year, so there's quite frankly no excuse.

I find it a little hard to take that we've spent this much time waiting for some substantive changes on adoption and instead what we are seeing is an attempt by the Liberal government to rush through very serious changes to how we will view adoption, how we will view crown wards and, moving forward, how we will allow children who are currently crown wards in our various children's aid societies to be placed with adoptive families. It's discouraging. It's unfortunate that we have come down to the last five sessional days and we are forced to discuss time allocation motions instead of actually discussing the true issue, which should be how we can improve the current adoption system.

As members will know, the vast majority of children who are currently crown wards within our various children's aid societies do not have the ability or the option available to them to be available for adoption to find forever families. That's what we're trying to bring forward and discuss with Bill 179. How unfortunate that the government has waited so long into their legislative mandate to bring forward any kind of changes.

I do not want to mislead the public to assume that these are substantive changes. There are some positive changes coming forward with Bill 179. I think that if you review the second reading debates from the Progressive Conservative caucus as well as from the NDP caucus—

although I certainly wouldn't want to speak for my NDP colleagues—we have generally spoken in support of the changes coming forward with 179. For the government to think they must ram through a time allocation motion is an unfortunate way to deal with a piece of legislation that all three parties would like to see move forward in Ontario, and move forward this spring.

What I really would like to have seen is the ability for Bill 179 to be introduced earlier in the session, and to have further input and allow people to actually see what the changes are, discuss with their children's aid societies, discuss with their constituents and families within their individual ridings what the changes will mean. There aren't any of us in this chamber who wouldn't have an ability to speak to or find someone who is either adopted or attempting to go through the current adoption process or, of course, ultimately, the children's aid society, which plays such a critical role in placement and encouraging families to adopt.

For the government to talk about a time allocation motion instead of actually giving the social policy committee the time to continue to work collaboratively—as I say, all of our second reading debates, you will find, have spoken generally in positive terms about Bill 179. For this time allocation motion to come forward, it really ends up throwing down the gauntlet a bit, quite frankly. We were working together. We were finding times that were appropriate. As I say, we had four hours of clause-by-clause scheduled for the next potential sitting of the social policy committee on Monday the 31st. I think it's really unfortunate that we've now been bullied into a time allocation motion. I don't think we'll need it, quite frankly. I don't think we did need it. It puts a different view on how, collectively, the members within the social policy committee and within this chamber could work together for the benefit of crown wards and families looking to adopt in Ontario.

I'll leave it at that. I think there are better ways that we could approach these issues. A time allocation motion on a bill that we were working together on is a really unfortunate way to end what could have been a very positive story about improving adoption in Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I confess that I find this time allocation motion puzzling. As far as I can tell from talking to my colleagues, debate was proceeding in a straightforward way. People had their opinions, weren't trying to talk this bill out, weren't trying to run the clock, and were grappling with very substantial issues; issues that, as everyone in this chamber is aware, have been left essentially to the last hour of an eight-year run by this government; issues that could have been debated earlier in this term.

We find it very strange that a bill that is of great consequence to so many children and so many families has essentially been brought in at the last minute. Now, instead of having a debate—not a held-up debate, not a debate that is going to be strangled—that allows everyone

in the House to have the say that is necessary, to give the stakeholders an opportunity to comment, it's being pushed through at an extraordinary rate, time-allocated.

I have to say to you, you're well aware that night sittings were scheduled and then cancelled. It wasn't as though we were running out of time. We are coming to the end of the session, but there was time set in the House for debate that has not been used. We look at this time allocation motion and we ask ourselves why on earth this government is acting in this way. Has it become more erratic in its planning? Is there an agenda that we're not aware of? We find it not a very productive way of running the business of this House.

Given that this motion will probably pass, given that the government has a majority, it's my hope that in the short time that will be allocated the substantial issues will get the airing they need; that there will be some debate to actually illuminate all the consequences of the bill before us. But I have to say to the government: You could have done a lot better with this. I think you misread the House. And if you didn't misread the House, then you're acting in a way that is very, very strange.

There's not a lot more to add on this, but I will say this: If the government wants to build up a record of time allocation and cutting off debate, then, with this motion, it has just continued to build on that record.

0920

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: I certainly want to echo the comments made by the two previous speakers, particularly my colleague from Dufferin-Caledon. I think we were all very shocked to learn that Bill 179, the Building Families and Supporting Youth to be Successful Act, was going to be time-allocated. It is a very heavy-handed approach to a bill that was receiving the support of the opposition parties.

Despite the fact that the bill certainly didn't go as far as it should have, it was at least a start in the right direction. The government has had almost eight years to address the issue of adoption. Unfortunately, I think they have not given this whole issue of adoption the attention that it deserves. They received recommendations from the Honourable David Johnston in his report in 2009. There were certainly many other recommendations that had been brought to their attention regarding the need to facilitate adoption, and they have ignored it until the very end of their term.

Instead of giving us the opportunity to thoughtfully put forward amendments to the bill, give the time needed to debate those amendments, come back into this House and debate the issues that were brought to our attention during the committee hearings, we're now going to be forced into a position where the bill is rushed through.

That's very disappointing, because many people came before the committee. We have received many, many written submissions from individuals who, although they support the bill, have brought to our attention glaring

omissions and actions that are occurring now in regard to adoption that need to be improved upon.

Unfortunately, we're not giving any of those submissions the due diligence they deserve. It is disappointing, when we were all moving forward and the bill was going to be passed. I don't think anybody was prepared to stand in the way of the bill moving forward. It could have been passed before the House supposedly adjourned on the second of June.

We're now in a position where we're really saying to people, "Your thoughts and your concerns don't really matter. We're going to bulldoze through at this point in time. We're not going to thoughtfully consider all of your amendments. We're not going to have a thoughtful debate. There's going to be a limited amount of time available."

I would say to you, adoption is a very important issue. This bill makes some steps forward to support both the children, who obviously need caring homes, and the families who can provide those homes.

I also think what happened when this bill was introduced is that we soon became aware of the need to do so much more for the children who are placed in homes—the follow-up, the financial support. Many children are going to be prevented from being placed in homes simply because families can't afford the care that's going to be needed if these children have special needs.

As I say, it is regrettable that we can't air and put on the table all of the concerns that have been brought to our attention. We were certainly committed to moving the bill forward, and it's disappointing that the government rushed the bill through, introduced it at the last minute and now is not going to give the opportunity for thoughtful debate and thoughtful discussion.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Seeing none, Mr. Phillips has moved government notice of motion number 78. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

This vote will be deferred until deferred votes, after question period.

Vote deferred.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Orders of the day.

Hon. Gerry Phillips: Mr. Speaker, no further business.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): There being no further business, this House stands in recess until 10:30 a.m., at which time we will have question period.

The House recessed from 0925 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Jim Wilson: It's my pleasure to introduce Gary and Maggie Perry, who bid on a lunch and tour with their

MPP in support of the Gibson Centre in Alliston. Welcome to Queen's Park and condolences at the same time.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I would ask the House to welcome my daughter, Jesse Cowparthwaite; her partner, Stan Welsey; and their darling child, Olivia Jane Wesley, who is also my first grandchild.

Mr. Mike Colle: I also have with me a family that won a prize of lunch with their MPP today. They're from Allenby school, one of Canada's finest grade schools, and they're the Abbey family. I'd like to welcome Nancy Abbey; her husband, Mitch; their daughter, Megan; and their son, Jonathan. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I would like to introduce the parents of Jonah Villanueva Merali, who are here to my left. The parents are Isfahan Merali, the mother; and Sergio Villanueva. I want to congratulate these parents for having raised a wonderful young man who speaks Spanish very well. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar: I would like to welcome to the Legislature 90 grade 5 students from Edenrose Public School along with their teacher and volunteers from my riding of Mississauga-Erindale. I'm sure they're going to enjoy question period today.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I don't believe they are in the House yet, but—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): They're in the Speaker's gallery.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Oh, they're in the Speaker's gallery. We have a group here from Oxford Reformed Christian School from the great riding of Oxford county. We want to welcome them here today. I didn't realize they were here yet, but I knew they were coming. We want to welcome them to Queen's Park.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I want to welcome the school as well, but particularly a good friend of mine, the teacher, Jake Van Meppelen-Scheppink, who's here with them as well. Welcome.

Mr. Paul Miller: I'd like to welcome Mr. Hayter and grade 5, Mountain View Public School, to the Legislature. They're up in the gallery.

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: Today is personal support workers' day at Queen's Park. There are a lot of PSWs who are visiting, so I welcome them to Queen's Park. Right after question period there's a reception in committee room 1. I welcome all members to please attend.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: Page Erica Geen is here today from Marchmont Public School, and her family is visiting us. Today, she is the page captain. In attendance we have her father, Andrew Geen; her mom, Claudia Swoboda; Emily Geen, her sister; Stewart Geen, her grandfather; Donna Geen, her grandmother; Jonathan Geen, her uncle; George Swoboda, her uncle; and Sandra Swoboda, her aunt.

Mr. Ted McMeekin: We have several students from McMaster University, my old alma mater, with us this morning, and all have been engaged at one point or another in my post-secondary advisory committee in the riding. Huzaifa Saeed is here; welcome. Alicia Ali is here

as well. Alicia, welcome. Matthew Dillon-Leitch is here; welcome, Matthew. Katie Ferguson is here, and, I understand, Duncan Thompson and Michael Wooder. Thank you very much for being with us today. Welcome.

Hon. John Milloy: I'd like to welcome Emily Hartman, an intern in my office, who is in the gallery today to watch question period.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: I, too, would like to welcome a couple of folks here at Queen's Park to have lunch with me today: Kate Mackinnon and Ben Normand.

Mr. Tony Ruprecht: I have the real pleasure to introduce some very distinguished guests and visitors who are showcasing the great musical talents of young Canadians. They are Mr. Srinu Iyengar, director of multicultural markets for the Bank of Montreal; Mr. Durval Terceira, business manager of LIUNA Local 183 labourers' union; Franco LaMagna and Zack Werner, iSTARS artist development, Musical Performing Arts Centre; Alan Ko, from OMNI television; Mr. João Vicente, from the OMNI diversity programming department; and Mr. John Santos, the founder and musical director of the national singing contest. Since they are celebrating their fifth anniversary today, I'd like to invite all the members to the festivities in room 163 at 11:30, right after question period.

ORAL QUESTIONS

ENERGY POLICIES

Mrs. Christine Elliott: My question is for the Minister of Energy. For eight years, Premier McGuinty has taken billions of dollars from Ontario families and thrown it away on expensive energy experiments. Rates have skyrocketed. Seniors and parents try to avoid a 150% rate hike for mandatory time of use by getting up early to shower and staying up late to do the laundry. He has turned a temporary debt retirement charge into a permanent tax grab. Adding insult to injury, he slaps the greedy HST tax grab on top of all of it.

Ontario PCs think that's wrong, which is why our leader announced that an Ontario PC government will give families relief by taking the HST off residential hydro and home heating bills and removing the so-called debt retirement charge from their hydro bills. Minister, why won't you?

Hon. Brad Duguid: For the second week in a row, the Leader of the Opposition has made another huge rookie mistake. Let me get this straight: You want to replace the clean energy benefit that's taking 10% off people's bills with a scheme that's going to take 8% off people's bills? That's going to cost Ontario families 2% more.

Then you want to take the \$350 million a year that's being put on to the hydro debt that you created when you were in power and add that to the provincial deficit. How is that credible? How does that help Ontario families?

Then on top of that, you want to put thousands of Ontario workers out of work. You want to tear down our

clean energy economy. You want to damage our international reputation.

This is a desperate Leader of the Opposition resorting to desperate promises that Ontario families are going to see right—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mrs. Christine Elliott: The fact is that Premier McGuinty has simply forgotten what it's like to have to worry about paying the bills. After eight years in power, he's simply too tired and too out of touch with families and seniors who are struggling to keep up.

The Ontario PC caucus has been listening to people in our communities who are feeling squeezed, which is why our plan to take the HST off residential hydro and home heating bills and to remove the so-called debt retirement charge from hydro bills provides people with—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock. The Minister of Research and Innovation will withdraw the comment that he just made.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Please continue.

Mrs. Christine Elliott: Our plan will provide Ontario families with \$275 in immediate relief. Why doesn't Premier McGuinty listen to Ontario families and seniors who say they can't afford his tax increases and skyrocketing hydro bills?

Hon. Brad Duguid: I think the Minister of Finance has a thing or two to say about that, so I'm going to refer that to him.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: This is a reckless plan, and it is completely false that Ontario families will save \$275. That party lacks credibility. They bring in the debt retirement charge; now they're going to take it off. They're going to eliminate the 10% Ontario clean energy benefit. They're going to eliminate the northern Ontario energy credit.

Let me tell you what else they're going to have to do: They're going to have to close hospitals and close schools. It was 16 years ago today that the former leader of that party looked at the camera and said, "It is not my plan to close hospitals." They closed hospitals. They closed schools.

1040

This is a reckless plan that lacks credibility—no numbers. I'll be filling in the blanks on all of that as we engage this debate. Ontarians will reject you—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Members will please come to order.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Member for Peterborough.

Final supplementary.

Mrs. Christine Elliott: Despite the Minister of Finance's bluster, the \$275 that an Ontario PC government would provide to Ontario families has been costed,

is realistic and can be done. All told, an Ontario PC government would give a 23% break to seniors and families on their hydro bills and we will give Ontario families a choice on how to save money by pulling the plug on mandatory time of use.

We are giving families and seniors a clear choice this October: another government led by Premier McGuinty who will increase their taxes and hike their hydro bills even more, or an Ontario PC government that respects them and gives them relief from tax increases and skyrocketing hydro bills.

How can you justify asking Ontario families and seniors to pay more?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: This reckless plan will cost jobs, raise the deficit, raise the debt, and they refuse to say what hospitals they will close.

Let me fill in some of the blanks. They are proposing \$1.3 billion in cuts and they've proposed no new revenue. We know what that means: That means that nurses will be laid off. That means cuts to education. That means cuts to the environment. That means a reckless approach that lacks credibility.

We've laid out a plan that is lowering prices for consumers across Ontario, that's building a new grid and that is building a better and safer supply of energy. Their plan is reckless, it lacks credibility and it will force the closure of hospitals and schools to accommodate their numbers that simply don't add up. No credibility and—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

ENERGY POLICIES

Mr. Jim Wilson: To the energy minister: The Ontario PCs are offering Ontario families and seniors who struggle to pay their hydro bills some much-needed immediate relief. Premier McGuinty said just yesterday when we were talking about this that he'll keep doing what he has been doing. Well, what has he been doing? He has been raising taxes and putting hydro bills through the roof. He's so desperate for money that he's still charging the debt retirement charge, even though the debt it goes to was paid off in 2010. We know it's true: He will keep doing what he has been doing because he says he will keep collecting the debt retirement charge until 2018, an extra six years. That's \$6.3 billion more out of the pockets of Ontario families.

Minister, why will you take billions from the pockets of Ontario families for a debt they've already paid?

Hon. Brad Duguid: To the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: Let me remind the member for Simcoe-Grey what he said in this House—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I've warned the member from Lanark previously about some of these comments, and I'm just going to ask that he withdraw the comment that he just made, please.

Mr. Randy Hillier: I withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Minister?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: Let me remind the member for Simcoe-Grey what he said with pride just two months ago: "I brought in the debt retirement charge"—the debt retirement charge—"when I was Minister of Energy."

Let me tell you where he's wrong: The debt is not paid off. I invite him to look at the financial statements of the province of Ontario. They did not pay it off. In fact, this scheme that they've put forward today reminds me of the scheme they put forward 10 years ago that closed—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Halton will withdraw the comment that he just made.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: I withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Minister.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: They don't want to hear the facts. Their plan will force the closure of schools and hospitals, raise the debt and raise the deficit. They'll lengthen the period of time it takes to balance the budget. It is reckless. It's irresponsible. It will lead to cuts in health care and education. We will fight them every step of the way—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary? The member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke.

Mr. John Yakabuski: They don't like it when somebody decides to do the right thing.

The Ontario PC leader wants to give seniors and families relief; Premier McGuinty wants to give them a permanent tax grab. Budget 2011 shows that Ontario families have already paid \$9.7 billion for a residual stranded debt that was \$7.8 billion. The debt is paid off, but you've pocketed \$2 billion more in debt retirement charges since it was paid off. The Premier won't say what he has done with the money. He just says he'll keep doing what he has been doing, collecting the debt retirement charge until 2018.

Ontario families and seniors need immediate relief from skyrocketing hydro bills. An Ontario PC government will give them just that. Why won't you?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: Let me refer the people of Ontario to the Auditor General's 2010 annual report, where he speaks about the debt retirement charge and the stranded debt. It was introduced in 1999 by that party. Here's what he said: "Initially, little progress was made in reducing the stranded debt." However, over the last few years, it has been steadily decreasing. According to the Auditor General, the stranded debt is now \$14.8 billion. We've reduced it \$6 billion. They are not levelling—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Simcoe-Grey will withdraw the comment that he just made.

Mr. Jim Wilson: I withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Minister?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: This is referred to as the province's stranded debt by the Auditor General. You've been caught out. You're not levelling with the people of Ontario. You raised their bills. You raised their debt. You

raised their deficit. You undermine the future stability of this province. Your plan is reckless, it's irresponsible. We'll fight you in the streets, every corner—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Stop the clock.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Final supplementary.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I'll tell you what undermines this province's ability to trim the deficit: his secret OPSEU deals and bonuses for those people at eHealth who wasted a billion dollars.

Ontario families make sacrifices to pay up to \$84 a year for debt retirement charges. The public record shows that the debt was paid off last year. They shouldn't have to pay for the debt retirement charge any longer. That's the residual stranded debt, Minister. But you've turned the DRC into a permanent tax grab. Financial statements of the independent commission responsible for hydro debt show they paid the debt. The Premier will keep doing what he's doing until families and seniors have paid \$16 billion for a \$7.8-billion debt.

1050

It is no wonder that Ontario families are looking for a change. An Ontario PC government is offering to give them permanent relief on their hydro bills. Why is Premier McGuinty only offering to give them a permanent new tax grab?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: At the time the debt retirement charge was brought in—I'd like to read a quote from Canada's new foreign affairs minister, because he's a very credible politician. At the time, in 1998, he said, "I think we're looking at 10 to 17 years, depending on conditions," to pay it off, and he was right. The Auditor General has verified that. You've ignored the Auditor General's report. You refuse to look at facts.

This plan has no credibility. It will raise the deficit and debt. They will have to cut hospitals; they will have to cut education, Mr. Speaker. We will fight them at every street corner in Ontario. The people of Ontario will see through the rhetoric over there and listen to people like the Auditor General. They'll do right; they'll vote for a government that will build on our health care and our education, eliminate our deficit, and bring down the debt in a—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Acting Premier. Over the last two weeks, we've watched the Premier avoid serious questions about the state of his government after eight long years in office: meddling with freedom-of-information requests, public dollars ending up in the coffers of the Ontario Liberal Party, and a culture of entitlement from a government that has gotten way too comfortable after that eight years in office.

Maybe the Acting Premier can tell us: Does the Premier of Ontario really believe that there are no problems here and the McGuinty Liberal status quo is actually working?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: We have expanded freedom of information; we have improved accessibility to information not just for the hydro agencies but for hospitals and universities and colleges.

In terms of political contributions, there are rules which we all follow, and I'm confident that those rules are strong rules and that, where there are challenges, errors can be corrected.

This government has a record of openness and accountability that is unparalleled in Ontario's history. We will continue to build on that. We will continue to improve the public services that Ontarians rely on, and we'll continue to offer a credible economic plan that will help build a better future for our children and grandchildren.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: These are issues that matter to families. While Liberal staff try to hide the facts about the unfair HST, and colleges and utilities spend scarce resources at Liberal fundraisers, Ontarians are paying the highest tuition in Canada, the highest electricity rates in Canada, and \$800 a year in harmonized sales tax.

The public dollars we invest in schools and utilities don't belong to the Liberal Party. The government of Ontario doesn't belong to the Liberal Party. Why don't the McGuinty Liberals get that?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: I think what Ontarians care about is health care. They care about the fact that we've introduced greater accountability in health care. We now measure a whole variety of services and wait times. According to outside independent observers, we are bringing those wait times down. That's what accountability is all about.

I think Ontarians are concerned about accountability in their school system, and that's why we've invested in the Education Quality and Accountability Office that helps parents and families understand how their kids are doing in school.

That's why we're making investments. That's the kind of accountability people in Ontario are interested in. They're not interested in false accusations and innuendo. They're interested in better schools, better health care. This government and party have a plan to continue to build on a record of success in those areas.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: After eight long years of this government's mandate, families are tired of a government that puts them last with an unfair sales tax that makes life less affordable, with closed emergency rooms and a growing wait-list for long-term care, and with the highest electricity prices and tuition fees anywhere in Canada. They are even more tired because they see that government putting themselves first, time and time again.

How can the government find time to meddle in freedom-of-information requests when they haven't

found the time to confront the challenges that families are facing?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: Over a year ago, the NDP promised to post their expenses online. We just checked, and they're not there. Shame on you.

Let me caution the leader of the third party: Those of us on this side of the House are ready to go. We're implementing full-day learning, even though they stood against it. We are continuing to reduce wait times in our hospital emergency rooms, even though they don't want to do that. We are prepared to help low-income Ontarians with the support of truly progressive Ontarians. That's why I don't understand why they voted against the child benefit. We on this side are prepared for the future. We're building the future, we've laid out a plan to get there and we're raring to go. The ideas we're putting forward will build better schools and health care and a better future for our children.

Where are your ideas? Get out of this innuendo and—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also to the Acting Premier. Families struggling to stay afloat want a little bit of help from their government, but their needs just don't seem to be a priority. The government can't find the time to give a straight answer on the HST, but they have plenty of time to stop freedom-of-information requests about it. The government can't find the money to give families a break, but public money keeps turning up at Liberal fundraisers. When did this government's priorities get so out of whack?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: We've laid out a plan, we've laid out 10 studies by independent economists, we've debated this across the province, and, by the way, we welcome the support and the acknowledgment by the Conservative Party of Ontario this morning that they're going to keep the HST. That was really, really an important announcement that was lost on many people this morning. We welcome that.

And let me tell you: We are going to continue to implement full-day learning for our kids; we're going to continue to innovate in health care to protect public health care in Ontario; we're going to continue to build a better environment for our children and lay out a plan to get back to balance as we build those public services, as we improve them, because that's what families want. I urge the leader of the third party to come clean on what you're going to do with the HST. Forget the innuendo and talk about what people really want to talk about: their schools and their hospitals and their health care system.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I'm listening to what people are saying, and here's what people are telling us. Nick and Judy Caruso in the Soo write, "Every time we see a little daylight, we seem to face another hike in our day-to-day expenses—groceries, heating, gasoline, taxes etc.

Help us to enjoy our senior years without worry." That's their plea.

Can the Acting Premier tell us how it is that the McGuinty Liberals can find money for everything from corporate tax giveaways to eHealth bonuses, but Nick and Judy can't manage to scratch a break from this government?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: When we found money for the Ontario clean energy benefit to lower rates by 10%, that member and her party voted against it. They said we should only have given 8%. When we created the Ontario child benefit to lower taxes for Ontario's most vulnerable and to help families with their children, that member and her party voted against it. When we created the northern energy credit for homeowners and businesses in the north, that member and her party didn't support it.

What she won't tell Ontarians is what she is going to do about the HST. We know that, like the Conservatives, she will keep it. That was a great announcement this morning, I must say. Judging by the looks on their faces, they are a little bit surprised by that.

This government has a plan. This party will take it to the people in October, and the people will vote for better schools and better health care, and reject the reckless plan of the Leader of the Opposition.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Margaret Leishman in Mississauga writes, "My husband and I are struggling to pay the high cost of heating and electricity bills with the addition of the HST. We have to sit with blankets on in the winter to keep warm, since we have to keep the thermostat down to try and save on the gas. We do everything possible to keep the hydro bills down as well, but to no avail."

Margaret could only have dreamed of getting the \$5,000 cheque that paid for admission to the Premier's fundraising dinner. When is he going to make her a priority?

1100

Hon. Dwight Duncan: Why, then, did that party vote against every tax break we've brought forward? Why don't they stand up for working families? That's precisely what we've done. And you know, the leader of the third party was strangely silent last week when the opposition decided to cancel 53,000 clean energy jobs.

Let me read you some quotes about that from people who actually work in these places. Somebody named Misty Oakley, a Siliken employee with three children who was on social assistance before securing her job, said that employment with the solar manufacturer means security and a good future for her family.

Get with us. Join us as we continue to implement a green energy plan that builds jobs, that will ensure a better future for our families and children as we invest in better health care and education. That's what the future is; that's what the people of Ontario want to hear about. Let's hear something of a plan—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: My question is to the Acting Premier. When the billion-dollar eHealth boondoggle first started breaking, the Premier dodged, he deflected and he stonewalled. He said everything was fine, that he had things under control, that rules were in place and he expected them to be followed. But then, the McGuinty government didn't get eHealth under control.

Now Ontario families are waking up to news that they still haven't gotten control of this runaway agency. Ontario families are looking for leadership from Premier McGuinty, but he's a no-show. He's missing in action. Is this the type of leadership that Dalton McGuinty is talking about?

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I've reminded the honourable member in the past about the use of names.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Is this the type of leadership Premier McGuinty is talking about when he says we should keep doing what we're doing?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: To the Minister of Health.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Let me say that I take the issue of compensation at eHealth seriously. I know Ontarians take it seriously, and that's why yesterday I spoke to the president and the chair of eHealth Ontario. I asked them to go back and take another look at this decision in light of the fiscal circumstances that we find ourselves in. That review is under way now, and I'm looking forward to the report back from eHealth Ontario.

eHealth has made tremendous progress over the past little while. We are back on track, and I look forward to the supplementary.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: It's clear that eHealth doesn't care what the finance minister, the Premier or the Minister of Government Services say. They don't respect them. You keep going to the well, and it's Ontario families who have to keep paying for all of the blunders at eHealth. Watching them let the architects of the billion-dollar eHealth boondoggle stick Ontario families with paying this bill again is why people are losing faith in this government. eHealth awarded pay increases and bonuses as though Ontario families did not go through a recession.

You said you had things under control, but the Premier, his Minister of Government Services and you are nowhere to be found when it comes to enforcing the rules protecting Ontario families' interests. Something has to change. It has to come from the start. Why didn't Premier McGuinty pay closer attention to this runaway eHealth agency, or is he just going to continue to do what he's been doing?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I think I've responded that we've asked eHealth to take a good, hard look at this decision, and I look forward to what they have to say. I can tell you that my focus is on getting results for the people of Ontario.

I just want to use this opportunity to describe one initiative under eHealth Ontario that is making a profound difference for people who have suffered brain injuries.

The ENITS program—emergency neurosurgery image transfer system—is allowing people to get the care they need in their local hospitals while obtaining expert advice from neurosurgeons who are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, because the images are available to those experts.

This initiative alone has saved \$50 million—\$50 million that we're putting into better front-line health care. This is one of many examples where eHealth is—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

CORONER'S INQUEST

Mr. Howard Hampton: I have a question for the Attorney General. Over the last week, the Attorney General has said in this Legislature and to the media that the long-delayed coroner's inquest into the disappearance and death of a First Nations high school student in Thunder Bay, which occurred in 2007, can now proceed. But when we called the coroner's office today we were told that the Reggie Bushie coroner's inquest in Thunder Bay is postponed. In fact, we're told that all four coroners' inquests in Thunder Bay are postponed.

Can the Attorney General tell us why he says these coroners' inquests can now proceed, but when you talk to the coroner's office, they continue to say that they're postponed?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: The heart of the issue here is to try to do whatever we can to find out what happened and what can be done to prevent tragedies like this from occurring.

I was directing my comments to my friend's questions over the past several days about the legal issues that went all the way up to the Court of Appeal, with a possibility of further appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada. Those issues were resolved by the Court of Appeal—we're not appealing—so that issue can no longer hold up the coroner's inquest.

The coroner is in charge of the inquest process. If there are further questions about that, I'll send them over to my friend the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Howard Hampton: The Attorney General continues to say that everything is resolved, but he only need read the recent decision of the regional senior judge in northwestern Ontario, Madam Justice Pierce, who looked very specifically at the issue of whether or not the jury panels in Thunder Bay district are representative or not. She looked specifically at the question and she said, just a couple of weeks ago, "It is evident to me on the testimony before the court that the process for selecting members of the First Nation communities to serve on jury panels is not representative of the population of the district of Thunder Bay"—and that's why none of these coroners' inquests are going forward.

The parents are no closer to getting the answers they deserve now—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you, Minister?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: As I said, the heart of this issue is what else can be done, what could be done and who can do it to try to make sure that terrible tragedies like this don't occur in the future.

We're working very hard within government. The coroner's inquest—the coroner is in charge of that process; they'll deal with that. That legal issue that went to the Court of Appeal—they gave a decision. We're not taking an appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada. We're all working very hard and we're all hoping that anything that can be found will be found and anything that can be done will be done to try to prevent terrible tragedies like this from happening in the future.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Bob Delaney: This question is for the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. The opposition is confused about our province's green energy plan and the thousands of jobs it is creating across Ontario. The Leader of the Opposition has referred to Ontario's investment by Samsung in renewable energy manufacturing capacity in unparliamentary terms and has called Ontario's feed-in tariff program "unsustainable."

Regions everywhere in the world disagree. They look to renewable energy as they compare the capital costs of baseload generation, the poisoning of the atmosphere from burning dirty coal and the need for a distributed electricity grid with generation from diverse sources.

Will the minister clarify what Samsung's investment in Ontario and the feed-in tariff program have done to develop Ontario's world-class green energy industry and create high-value—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you, Minister?

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: I'm delighted to answer this question because the people on this side of the House are interested in going around the world and bringing new companies to Ontario to invest in clean energy—and the best example of that is an investment deal of billions of dollars by Samsung. So this so-called deal that the opposition wants to refer to is actually billions of dollars of investment that Samsung is making in Ontario, creating those jobs and the whole supply chain that that creates across our economy.

We are meeting these people every day, people like Sean Moore from Unconquered Sun, who moved from the auto industry to start a business and who is already selling to American counterparts in the area of green energy.

This is a great contrast between us and the opposition. They are for dirty coal; we're for clean—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

1110

Mr. Bob Delaney: Minister, there should be no illusions or confusion as to what Samsung's investments in

Ontario and the feed in-tariff program are all about, and what a huge boost they are to Ontario's growing world-class green energy industry.

Ontario's much-acclaimed green energy plan builds the green energy sector in Ontario and enhances many other manufacturing and science-based industries as well. It's one of the factors in Ontario's first-ever economic recovery from a recession without a corresponding US economic rebound.

Will the minister describe how Samsung's investment and the feed-in tariff program have helped create world-class green energy supply chains and helped business people start, relocate and expand world-class, profitable industries here in Ontario in a leading-edge 21st-century industry?

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: Thank you, and this is important. It's important that the people in Sault Ste. Marie understand that the steel from Sault Ste. Marie is going to those turbines that are being built by Samsung. Some \$7 billion worth of investment: That's the deal that Samsung is making with Ontario.

Just for contrast, the Leader of the Opposition is part of a history government that created the attempt at privatization and cost us \$20 billion in debt for hydro, compared to our government creating a \$7-billion investment deal in Ontario that creates a supply chain: everything from racking and solar panels to turbines and blades to people in Tillsonburg understanding that they are part of this clean, green energy renewal. That's the difference between the past and the future.

EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: My question is to the Acting Premier. In my previous question, I couldn't believe my ears when the Minister of Health defended taxpayers being billed for yet another scandal at eHealth. Ontario families are looking for the Premier to show leadership and get control over this runaway agency.

They can't count on you or the Minister of Government Services: He says the 10% bonuses were within the so-called "tough new rules" that you brought in. They can't count on the Minister of Health: She just offers crocodile tears, blames you for not following the rules and blames the runaway agency for not following them.

They're not self-regulated. Ontario families are paying you to do the job. Why isn't anyone in the McGuinty government able to defend Ontario families—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Acting Premier?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: To the Minister of Health to defend Ontario families.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I have to confess that I'm a tiny bit confused by the question, but let me do my best.

I have a quote that I'd like to read about eHealth. "The province of Ontario, by the way, has taken some important steps forward in terms of electronic health records and so on. These are very important. The province is looking for savings ... I know that the provinces have to

be efficient and effective in health care, just as they know we're going to have some significant increases in health care over time." Who's singing the praise of Ontario's eHealth strategy? Jim Flaherty.

Let me just tell you that we are working very hard to improve front-line care. The personal support workers are with us today. Those are the heroes. Those are the people we're working for.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Speaker, I'm sure that Jim Flaherty and the folks up there are just as ashamed of her as I am for the amount of money that they have let slip away at this troubled agency.

The Minister of Health says that she met with her troubled eHealth agency after they got caught handing out 10% merit pay bonuses during a recession. It is hard to know what she had to say. You had your moral authority undermined to protect Ontario families from runaway spending on pay increases when you did nothing to deal with arbitrators and union bosses who called your bluff on a wage freeze. Then you got caught handing out secret wage hikes to OPSEU and others, and then you handed Ron Sapsford a secret settlement to go away from eHealth. If the Liberal billion-dollar boondoggle didn't get the McGuinty Liberals to make changes at eHealth, then what will?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I am very, very proud of the progress that is happening at eHealth Ontario. Make no mistake: I have asked the CEO and the chair to review the decision that was made and I'm giving them a few days to do exactly that.

In the meantime, we're looking at getting results for families. In fact, we're very concerned about your announcement this morning. Your announcement will actually increase visits to emergency departments, because as the air gets dirtier, more children will be coming to our emergency departments. Asthma is one of the leading causes of children coming to emergency departments. By cleaning the air, we're reducing that demand.

The people opposite want to smog up the air again. We're with the children in this province; we're on the side of clean air.

TUITION

Mr. Rosario Marchese: To the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities: Later today, the University of Toronto governing council—without even holding a vote, as I understand it—will impose a new flat-fee structure for students in the faculty of arts and sciences. Starting in September, students who take only three courses will be forced to pay for five courses. This will increase tuition fees by a staggering 66%. Does the minister support this plan?

Hon. John Milloy: I'm very proud that our government has worked very hard to make sure that post-secondary education is affordable for students in the province of Ontario. For the past number of years, we have worked to cap tuition and at the same time put

forward one of the most generous student assistance programs in the country.

Some of the changes that we brought in about a year ago have addressed a variety of concerns that were brought forward to us from student groups and organizations.

It's very interesting; we did an exercise, which I'm very happy to share with members, where we looked at a student from a family that was earning \$70,000 a year. When we took office, if that student went away to study, he would have received about \$4,000 in loans. Under our program, the same student would receive \$12,000 in a combination of loans and grants.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I'm not sure how this blah, blah, blah—or, to put it more delicately, this blather—is going to help students.

On the ground, university education is becoming less and less affordable for Ontario students, who pay the highest fees in Canada and shoulder the heaviest debt load.

Over 4,000 students, parents, faculty and alumni have voiced their opposition to the U of T flat-fee model because it penalizes students. Why won't the minister show some leadership and require the University of Toronto and all Ontario universities to end this unfair flat fee?

Hon. John Milloy: Quite frankly, I find it galling that a member of a party that, when they were in power, cut student aid by 48% and allowed tuition to increase by 50%, would stand up and do nothing short of applaud our efforts to make sure that post-secondary education in the province of Ontario is affordable.

We have a tuition framework in place which limits tuition increases at colleges and universities. If colleges and universities do take advantage of that, they have to provide additional funding and support to students who are in need.

I am proud of the fact that in the province of Ontario we have the most generous student assistance program in the country, which is benefiting students and has seen an additional 140,000 students at our colleges and universities.

I have no lessons to take from a member—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

ELECTORAL REFORM

Mrs. Liz Sandals: My question is for the Attorney General. In the recent federal election, voters in my riding of Guelph were allegedly subjected to extreme voter-suppression tactics. I heard from many of my constituents who received automated telephone messages claiming to be from Elections Canada and directing them to go to a new polling location. They went to the new polling location; there was no poll there.

My constituents are understandably angry that someone deliberately misled them and interfered with their democratic right to vote.

Some voters barely got back to the right poll in time to vote; others may never have gotten back to the right poll.

I know that people in Guelph who were directly targeted by this organized scam are glad that we are taking action.

Attorney General, how exactly will our—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Minister?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: The member for Guelph raises a very important issue that concerns us all: the right of individuals to exercise their freedom to vote, their right to vote; their very precious democratic expression, without interference, without it being undermined.

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These amendments to the Election Act will specifically prohibit—because the act doesn't contain that now—people from interfering with an elector's right to vote; specifically prohibit somebody from interfering, from representing themselves as a candidate or as an elections official; and specifically raise the penalties for any such corrupt practice to a \$25,000 fine and potentially two years less a day in jail; strong protections for conduct we should all—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mrs. Liz Sandals: My constituents in Guelph are glad that the government is taking action. It's obvious to me and it's obvious to them that removing any interference with voting should be of paramount importance to all members of this Legislature. We are, after all, a key institution in the functioning of true democracy, empowered by the people of Ontario to act on their behalf. That is why I was shocked by the reaction of some to the introduction of this legislation designed specifically to protect the right to vote. I can't understand why anyone would want to delay passage of this important legislation.

Can the Attorney General explain to this House why it is so important that we get these changes made?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: I would have thought it was important to us all. I would have thought it was important—I know it's important to all Ontarians because, however they exercise their right to vote, they want to be able to—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Simcoe North, the member for Lanark, please come to order.

Minister?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: Why are people trying to shout down these very important pieces of information? Why would anyone not want an elector to be able to go to the right polling station to cast their ballot? Why would anyone think it was okay to represent themselves as an election official or represent themselves as a candidate from another party when they were not? Why would anyone in any way condone or accept that activity? I call on the members opposite, who are so loud right now, to stand up and support—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Ted Arnott: My question is for the Minister of Health. The government's budget papers indicate that she plans to spend more than \$2.5 billion on hospital infrastructure this year. My constituents in Wellington-Halton Hills deserve their fair share. When will the minister announce the capital grant for the Georgetown Hospital renovation project and when will she announce the planning grant and approval for the Groves Memorial Community Hospital in Centre Wellington to move to the next stage of planning for our new hospitals?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Thank you to the member opposite for the question. I understand that Georgetown Hospital has submitted a proposal to expand their emergency department. The Minister of Infrastructure and my ministry and others are currently developing a 10-year plan so we can continue with building the infrastructure in this province.

I do understand why the member opposite might be a little antsy about this because if, by any chance, his government ends up in power after the next election, I think we'll see a screeching halt to any capital development whatsoever.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Ted Arnott: That is utter nonsense and the minister knows it. Excuses and political baffleab—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock. Members will please come to order. Minister, your seatmate wants to hear the question.

Continue.

Mr. Ted Arnott: We have made our case for these projects. I've raised our hospital issues time and time again in this House, as members know. I've said I didn't believe that the Liberals would be so miserable as to punish our communities by ignoring our hospital needs because of past voting patterns. I'm beginning to wonder if I gave the Liberal Party too much credit.

The council of the town of Halton Hills needs an immediate answer on what support you'll extend for Georgetown Hospital. My Wellington county constituents are anticipating an announcement on the Groves project. When will the government do the right thing and approve our hospital projects, as my constituents deserve?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: What I can tell you is that when we came to office in 2003, we inherited a disgraceful deficit when it came to our health care infrastructure. You know that, Speaker.

We are the party that, when we had the chance, started to build. We have built 18 brand new hospitals across this province—18 brand new hospitals. You're the party that closed hospitals. We have 100 major capital projects across this province and we intend to keep on building.

I think what you have to think hard about is whether you really want to be part of a party that wants to cut health care, because you cannot cut taxes without cutting health care. The first thing that will go, once you fire the nurses, is that you will close the hospitals. It's what you did before, and I would love you to stand up and say, "Keep on going," when it comes to building.

INSURANCE RATES

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Acting Premier. This week, Ontario's insurance brokers joined a chorus of consumers and anti-poverty group in demanding an end to the use of credit scores to obtain home insurance. They've actually launched a website called soaringinsurancerates.ca that says that about half of the big insurance companies are using credit scores to set premiums and even to deny coverage.

Why won't this government listen to the insurance brokers, to the consumers' groups, to the anti-poverty groups and ban the use of credit scores in the home insurance industry?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: In fact, we do meet with all of those groups. We have applied those rules to certain forms of insurance. We will continue to work with them.

But I am most proud of our record on auto insurance and how we've held the rate of growth on costs in auto insurance, because that's what matters to people. They've got better insurance at lower costs. We'll continue to work with consumers and the industry to ensure that we have a strong, vibrant insurance industry: home and auto. That's important to Ontarians. I'm glad we've been able to keep the rate increases low, certainly lower than the previous government, and lower than they were in the early 1990s. That's a record to be proud of. We'll continue to work with everyone in the industry, particularly consumers, to keep their prices down.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Perhaps this is information for the Acting Premier. The brokers looked at one insurance company known to aggressively rely on credit scoring. They found that credit scoring increased premiums by up to \$762 annually. Evidence shows that credit scoring discriminates against those with low incomes as well as newcomers.

Why won't this government make it easier and more affordable to obtain home insurance and ban credit scoring in the home insurance industry once and for all?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: Let me give the leader of the third party just a number of the things that we've done. First of all, our government banned the use of credit scores on auto insurance. We eliminated the backdoor use of credit scores when it comes to quoting rates for a consumer. Going forward, we will continue to look into the use of credit scores. It's important that, just like our five-year review, we have a balanced approach.

The leader of the third party is probably not aware that in November, the Canadian Council of Insurance Regulators, the CCIR, posted the results of a questionnaire.

She probably didn't want to put this into her question, because it might tend to undermine the premise of it, but let me just make sure the people of Ontario get the complete story: They are now reviewing and examining the issues surrounding the use of credit information by insurers across the country so that they can work in tandem.

That's what's important. Why didn't you say that in your question? You know what's going on. It's another—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Thank you. New question.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Mr. Mario Sergio: My question is for the Minister of Energy. Every member of this House and the government of Ontario work diligently to serve and assist seniors in our communities. We do so because too many seniors cannot protect themselves from the underhanded tactics of unconscientious scam artists. This is compounded when the perpetrators approach unsuspecting seniors under the names of recognizable agencies such as Summit Energy, Direct Energy, Just Energy and Active Energy. In some cases, seniors are forced to deal with a new contract they have never signed. In other cases, they incur higher costs they did not expect and are forced to pay heavy penalties if they wish to cancel. Sometimes they are told straight up that getting out of the contract is impossible.

Minister, my seniors are asking that these underhanded practices be stopped—no more abuses. They would like to hear from you.

Hon. Brad Duguid: I want to thank the member for York West for his question and let him know that I share his concerns and the concerns of his constituents about some of the unfair practices in the retail energy industry.

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Retailer conduct and contracts are the number one issue that the Ontario Energy Board used to hear about when it came to complaints, particularly from vulnerable consumers like the seniors the member cares so dearly about. That's why we brought in the Energy Consumer Protection Act, which took effect on January 1 of this year. Through this act, we've greatly strengthened protection for consumers by making sure the contracts offered by retailers are clear and concise, that there are ways out and that those who come to the door have to abide by a strict set of rules.

I'll be happy to expand on that further, but I want to thank the member for York West for his question and for always standing up for seniors in his community.

Mr. Mario Sergio: Michele Colandrea, Vincenzo Angelucci, Vincenzo Panacci, Placido Mongillo and Mario Iannuzzi are only a few of the many seniors who have been subjected to similar and other scams. Every week, we see someone who has been approached under misleading pretences, and this not only leaves our seniors shaken and frustrated but, all too often, bitter that their sincerity was abused and taken advantage of by un-

scrupulous individuals. Yes, they were indeed carrying a clipboard.

Therefore, I ask the Minister how he sees this concern and how he addresses these abuses, because our seniors deserve respect and honesty from those who may come to their door.

Hon. Brad Duguid: Grazie to the member. The simple fact of the matter is, the previous PC government opened up the market to energy consumers. When they did that, they failed to put in place any protections or safeguards for consumers whatsoever—another in a long list of the negative legacy that that party left behind when it came to the energy system.

We're seeing more of that today. When we look back to their legacy, part of their legacy was the hydro debt that they left behind. They brought in a debt retirement charge, and they didn't use that to pay down the debt. It's part of the legacy that we've had to deal with. Our finance minister will tell that you we've paid that debt down steadily since we've been in office.

Now they've got this reckless scheme which would have the effect of actually increasing bills by 2%. We stand by our clean energy benefit that's taking bills down by 10%.

They brought up their use of dirty coal by 127%. We're eliminating the use of dirty coal, and we're going to—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Thank you. New question.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: My question is for the Minister of Education. Minister, under your government, only 56% of elementary schools in Ontario have a teacher-librarian. This is 24% lower than a decade ago. A clear trend is emerging: Despite the billions spent on education, Ontario families and students are paying more and getting less.

Libraries today are information and research centres. In a digital era, they are needed more than ever. Will you show leadership and conduct a review of school libraries to develop strategies to ensure their future?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: That is very rich coming from a member who, when in government, only cut education. This government has invested in education, and we've increased our investment by 46% since we've come to government.

That party cuts education. That party does not support full-day kindergarten. What we know today from the announcement that was just made is that our families should be very worried about the cuts that will be coming in education to pay for their reckless plan in energy.

When it comes to investing in education and investing in libraries, our government has a record. It's a solid record, and I would put it beside their plan any day.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Supplementary

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: Again to the Minister of Education: It has to be extremely disappointing for the thousands of people throughout the province of Ontario who are seriously concerned about the elimination of libraries in our schools to hear the minister refuse to address the issue.

Minister, you responded to the parents in Windsor who opposed the dismantling of the Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board libraries in a very weak way. You urged them to do something, but you are the only person who has the power to correct this situation.

I say to you again: Remember, our libraries are information and research centres. Will you direct your ministry to review the situation and develop strategies to ensure the future of our libraries for future generations?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: I say that the people of Ontario will remember the deep cuts that libraries suffered under the previous government. People for Education's report made it very clear that between 1998 and 2002, libraries across Ontario suffered deep cuts at the hands of the previous government.

How we have stood up for libraries and recognized their importance is by increasing library technician and teacher-librarian technician positions by 12% since coming to government. We have also provided \$40 million over four years for libraries in elementary schools. In addition to that, we have provided \$120 million in one-time funding for library books.

They cut funding to libraries. We have only invested in libraries since we've come to government.

ACCESS TO PUBLIC LANDS

Mr. Gilles Bisson: My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources. Minister, as you know, it's the Victoria Day weekend, otherwise known as the "May run" where we come from, a time when people get out their fishing poles and boats and are finally able to get out and do some fishing. Imagine how mad they are when they go to places like the Foleyet timber road and find out that your ministry has now blocked access to a number of lakes that families have been fishing for generations.

Why is it that your government continually tries to block access for law-abiding citizens in northern Ontario? All they want to do this weekend is go fishing, but they're prevented by your closure of roads.

Hon. Linda Jeffrey: I've said time and time again that the vast majority of crown land in Ontario—over 90%—is not restricted at all. When we actually do restrict access, it's primarily aimed at limiting motorized vehicular access to protect public safety, to protect sensitive fisheries and wildlife populations.

Again, I want to reassure the honourable member that whenever we restrict access to a crown road for any other reason than emergency public safety, my ministry seeks local input through numerous consultations and open houses. We do this because we know that local problems demand local solutions.

The truth is, road access restrictions are not new. There were road restrictions in northern Ontario when the honourable member's colleague was the Minister of Natural Resources. There were road access restrictions when the Leader of the Opposition was the Minister of Northern Development and Mines. This has been happening for decades.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Supplementary?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: First of all, these lakes were all open when we were in government. They were open when the previous government was there. They were open when Dalton McGuinty got elected.

I have a list of what's being shut down on the Foleyet timber road: Dandilee Lake, Rainy Lake, Ridley Lake, North Ridley Lake, Little Ridley Lake, Cree Lake, Engineer Lake, Silvana Lake—there's a list of around 30 lakes just on the Foleyet timber road that have been shut down by your government over the last couple of years.

Don't come here and say you consulted. The only way people are finding out is when they go there and see the sign on the gate on the road.

I say again, why won't you open up these areas and allow people who have had access to those lakes for years to go out and do what they want to do, which is to fish on those lakes as they have for many generations?

Hon. Linda Jeffrey: It's funny; whenever the honourable member from Timmins—James Bay asks me a question, I'm reminded of that old Neil Young song *You Never Call*. It's even on his album *Twisted Road*.

I could have saved the honourable member a lot of time if he'd just picked up the phone and called me. If he took the time to call me, come and see me or even tweet me, I would have told him that there are no additional road access restrictions in Timmins and Chapleau districts.

Rather than simply repeating rumours in this Legislature, the honourable member should just come and see me, and I'll give him the truth about road access restrictions. Just like the roads in northern Ontario, my door is always open.

ABORIGINAL CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: My question is for the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs. Minister, recreation and physical activity are powerful tools in supporting the development of life skills for youth and have been shown to lead to improved health, well-being and educational outcomes. That is why last spring, I was pleased to table, on behalf of my constituents, a petition encouraging our government to continue expanding youth initiatives in this province, especially in the effort to promote and improve the health of First Nations youth in Ontario.

Would the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs please provide an update on the expansion of aboriginal youth programs and how his ministry has been working to improve conditions and opportunities for these deserving young people?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: My colleague from Ottawa Centre is exactly right: These programs can make quite a magical difference in the lives of aboriginal youth who have not yet had the opportunity. Right to Play, for example: My colleague the Minister of Energy and the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs have worked hard to bring them into Ontario. There are two communities that are benefiting, and, we hope, more in the future. Canadian Tire Jumpstart has done a great job in partnering up with this ministry and with the Ministry of Health Promotion in making sure that seven communities have access to community wellness workers who engage young people in positive athletic activity, and Canadian Tire Jumpstart has provided equipment for them. We have one laptop per child that is going to five different communities in the province of Ontario.

These are just some of the initiatives. We're trying to give kids a little bit of hope and chance where they haven't had it before.

DEFERRED VOTES

TAXATION

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): We have a deferred vote on Mr. Chudleigh's amendment to the amendment to Ms. Smith's motion concerning Ontario's tax plan for jobs and growth.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1141 to 1146.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): All those in favour of Mr. Chudleigh's amendment to the amendment will please rise one at a time and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Arnott, Ted
Bisson, Gilles
Chudleigh, Ted
Clark, Steve
DiNovo, Cheri
Dunlop, Garfield
Elliott, Christine
Gélinas, France

Hampton, Howard
Hardeman, Ernie
Hillier, Randy
Horwath, Andrea
Jones, Sylvia
Klees, Frank
Kormos, Peter
Marchese, Rosario

Miller, Norm
Munro, Julia
O'Toole, John
Ouellette, Jerry J.
Savoline, Joyce
Tabuns, Peter
Witmer, Elizabeth
Yakubski, John

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): All those opposed to the motion will please rise one at a time until counted by the Clerk.

Nays

Albanese, Laura
Arthurs, Wayne
Balkissoon, Bas
Bentley, Christopher
Best, Margaret
Bradley, James J.
Brotten, Laurel C.
Brownell, Jim
Cansfield, Donna H.
Chiarelli, Bob
Colle, Mike

Gerretsen, John
Gravelle, Michael
Hoskins, Eric
Hoy, Pat
Jaczek, Helena
Jeffrey, Linda
Johnson, Rick
Kular, Kuldeep
Lalonde, Jean-Marc
Leal, Jeff
Levac, Dave

Murray, Glen R.
Naqvi, Yasir
Pendergast, Leeanna
Phillips, Gerry
Pupatello, Sandra
Ramal, Khalil
Rinaldi, Lou
Ruprecht, Tony
Sandals, Liz
Sergio, Mario
Smith, Monique

Crozier, Bruce
Delaney, Bob
Dickson, Joe
Dombrowsky, Leona
Duguid, Brad
Duncan, Dwight

Matthews, Deborah
McMeekin, Ted
McNeely, Phil
Meilleur, Madeleine
Milloy, John
Mitchell, Carol

Sousa, Charles
Takhar, Harinder S.
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Zimmer, David

Elliott, Christine
Gélinas, France

Kormos, Peter
Marchese, Rosario

Witmer, Elizabeth
Yakabuski, John

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):
The ayes are 24; the nays are 49.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): I declare the motion lost.

We will now deal with Mr. Yakabuski's amendment to the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Is it agreed? Same vote? Agreed.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):
The ayes are 24; the nays are 49.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): I declare the motion lost.

We'll now deal with the main motion. Is it the pleasure of the House that Ms. Smith's motion concerning Ontario's tax plan for jobs and growth carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1150 to 1151.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura
Arthurs, Wayne
Balkissoon, Bas
Bentley, Christopher
Best, Margaret
Bradley, James J.
Brotan, Laurel C.
Brownell, Jim
Cansfield, Donna H.
Chiarelli, Bob
Colle, Mike
Crozier, Bruce
Delaney, Bob
Dickson, Joe
Dombrowsky, Leona
Duguid, Brad
Duncan, Dwight

Gerretsen, John
Gravelle, Michael
Hoskins, Eric
Hoy, Pat
Jaczek, Helena
Jeffrey, Linda
Johnson, Rick
Kular, Kuldeep
Lalonde, Jean-Marc
Leal, Jeff
Levac, Dave
Matthews, Deborah
McMeekin, Ted
McNeely, Phil
Meilleur, Madeleine
Milloy, John
Mitchell, Carol

Murray, Glen R.
Naqvi, Yasir
Pendergast, Leeanna
Phillips, Gerry
Pupatello, Sandra
Ramal, Khalil
Rinaldi, Lou
Ruprecht, Tony
Sandals, Liz
Sergio, Mario
Smith, Monique
Sousa, Charles
Takhar, Harinder S.
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Zimmer, David

Nays

Amott, Ted
Bisson, Gilles
Chudleigh, Ted
Clark, Steve
DiNovo, Cheri
Dunlop, Garfield

Hampton, Howard
Hardeman, Ernie
Hillier, Randy
Horwath, Andrea
Jones, Sylvia
Klees, Frank

Miller, Norm
Munro, Julia
O'Toole, John
Ouellette, Jerry J.
Savoline, Joyce
Tabuns, Peter

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):
The ayes are 49; the nays are 24.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

TIME ALLOCATION

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): We now have a deferred vote on the motion by Mr. Phillips for allocation of time on Bill 179, An Act to amend the Child and Family Services Act respecting adoption and the provision of care and maintenance.

Call in the members—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Same vote? No?

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1153 to 1154.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura
Amott, Ted
Arthurs, Wayne
Balkissoon, Bas
Bentley, Christopher
Best, Margaret
Bradley, James J.
Brotan, Laurel C.
Brownell, Jim
Cansfield, Donna H.
Chiarelli, Bob
Chudleigh, Ted
Clark, Steve
Colle, Mike
Crozier, Bruce
Delaney, Bob
Dickson, Joe
Dombrowsky, Leona
Duguid, Brad
Duncan, Dwight
Dunlop, Garfield
Elliott, Christine

Gerretsen, John
Gravelle, Michael
Hardeman, Ernie
Hillier, Randy
Hoskins, Eric
Hoy, Pat
Jaczek, Helena
Jeffrey, Linda
Johnson, Rick
Jones, Sylvia
Klees, Frank
Kular, Kuldeep
Lalonde, Jean-Marc
Leal, Jeff
Levac, Dave
Matthews, Deborah
McMeekin, Ted
McNeely, Phil
Meilleur, Madeleine
Miller, Norm
Milloy, John
Mitchell, Carol

Munro, Julia
Murray, Glen R.
Naqvi, Yasir
O'Toole, John
Ouellette, Jerry J.
Pendergast, Leeanna
Phillips, Gerry
Pupatello, Sandra
Ramal, Khalil
Rinaldi, Lou
Ruprecht, Tony
Sandals, Liz
Savoline, Joyce
Sergio, Mario
Smith, Monique
Sousa, Charles
Takhar, Harinder S.
Witmer, Elizabeth
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Yakabuski, John
Zimmer, David

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): All those opposed to the motion will please rise one at a time and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Bisson, Gilles
DiNovo, Cheri
Gélinas, France

Hampton, Howard
Horwath, Andrea
Kormos, Peter

Marchese, Rosario
Tabuns, Peter

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):
The ayes are 65; the nays are 8.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): I don't believe we have any more deferred votes. This House stands in recess until 1 p.m.

The House recessed from 1156 to 1300.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

MOOSE TAGS

Mr. Randy Hillier: Bruce Munro and members of his hunting party were recently denied moose tag permits from the MNR. I'm told that MNR receives 100,000 moose tag applications each and every year, yet only about 3,000 moose tags are issued. For those who are not selected each year, they are put in a preferential pool for the following year's selection. Unfortunately, Bruce and his group will not be in the preferred pool this year because the ministry lost his application.

Bruce's application was not the only one that was lost, however. The ministry is offering to correct their own error if an individual can show a copy of the application and the receipt of the registered mail. However, individuals such as Bruce are less fortunate. He only has an affidavit from his local postmaster confirming that his applications were put in the mail which, according to the ministry, is not enough.

I would like to suggest to the minister the following advice: If applicants must protect themselves from the incompetence of the ministry by making copies of their submissions and sending them by registered mail, maybe people should be informed of the MNR's incompetence at the start of the process, not after the damage is done.

AGAPE CENTRE

Mr. Jim Brownell: I rise in the House today to thank and pay tribute to the Agape Centre in my riding of Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry.

The Agape Centre strives to reduce the impact of poverty in the community by providing food, clothing and household items to those in need. The Agape Centre is run by a group of tireless volunteers and staff members who make sure operations run smoothly and the needs of clients are met.

Alyssa Blais, the newly appointed executive director of the centre, has been hard at work in her first four months on the job. Alyssa and her team recently achieved the fundraising goal of \$17,000 for kitchen repairs and new appliances in the centre.

The Agape Centre held a successful food drive over the Easter weekend at local grocery stores. The event brought in hundreds of food items for clients of the food bank program.

The Agape Centre is hosting an event, in partnership with the Cornwall Public Library, on May 31 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., to have a discussion about hunger and to launch their first Go Hungry 4 Agape fundraiser.

Since its founding in 1971, the Agape Centre has ensured that no family in Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry goes hungry or cold or without any of their basic necessities of life. I would like to thank everyone at the Agape Centre, and especially the volunteers, for everything they do and the support they provide to our community.

I would like at this time to congratulate and thank Alyssa, the newly appointed executive director, and the former executive director, Judy Dancause.

JOE HUDSON

Mr. Steve Clark: It's an honour to rise and speak about Joe Hudson, one of the most outstanding business owners and citizens in my riding of Leeds-Grenville.

In Lyn, Joe operates Burnbrae Farms, one of Canada's leading producers and processors of eggs. In fact, Joe is known as the Omega 3 Man for Burnbrae's development of the Naturegg brand, Canada's number one omega 3 egg.

Recently, Joe was honoured with the 2011 Get Cracking Award at the Egg Farmers of Ontario annual general meeting.

Burnbrae Farms is not only a major employer in my riding, but the Hudson family is a tireless supporter of community causes. Joe has been a strong proponent of Ontario's agribusiness sector and supply management in his 31 years as a board director with the Egg Farmers of Ontario.

His daughter, Mary Jean McFall, stepped into his seat on the board and was director for 12 years, from 1998 to 2010.

Joe and his brother, Grant, took over the family farm in Lyn from their dad, Joseph, during the 1940s. It had been a dairy farm, and there's a great story about how Canada's top egg producer got its start. The idea was hatched when Joe raised 50 leghorn chickens for a high school science fair project in 1943. By the time he graduated, those 50 chickens had become 3,000. The rest, as they say, is history.

Burnbrae now has operations coast to coast and is an industry leader in innovation and product development.

On behalf of everyone in my riding, I congratulate Joe and his entire family on this latest recognition. I can think of no one more deserving.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I've had the opportunity recently to talk to people in my riding about the health care system. As is probably true with everyone in this chamber, people in my community treasure that public health care system. They have tremendous admiration for doctors, for nurses, for personal support workers, all those people who make that system function, who deliver the health care that they need.

But I want to tell you now that many of the people I talk to in my community feel that that system is under siege. They find that they can't find doctors, general practitioners. They find that services have been delisted.

They find long waits in emergency rooms. Most important, they're worried that this public health care system is something that could be lost, that its public nature could be lost.

Premier McGuinty, in his delisting of services, in his privatization of hospital financing, in his mismanagement of the eHealth file, has damaged our health care system. It's no wonder that people in my riding and across Ontario are worried about the health care system.

PERSONAL SUPPORT WORKERS

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: I am very privileged today to rise and recognize the personal support workers across Ontario and the dozens of PSWs who have come to Queen's Park today for the second annual Personal Support Worker Day.

These workers are a critical component of our health care system and a vital support for families and seniors in our province. We owe them a debt of gratitude for the hard work and caring service they offer our citizens every single day. Their day at Queen's Park is an important opportunity for members of this Legislature to meet, listen and learn from these front-line health workers. I can assure them that we are listening.

I thank them for taking time from their busy lives to come here and help us understand their challenges and ideas. In fact, I was pleased that, just moments ago, the Minister of Health announced to stakeholders, supporters and PSWs a new PSW registry, a key step forward to ensuring excellent care at the front lines of our health system.

As our government works tirelessly to transform health care into a high-quality, compassionate and sustainable system constituents want and need, personal support workers undoubtedly play a key role in that transformation, and we are pleased to work with them as we improve our system on behalf of all Ontarians.

ROTARY CLUB OF COURTYCE

Mr. John O'Toole: Last night, I had the opportunity of attending the second annual youth and community leadership dinner hosted by the Rotary Club of Courtyce in my riding of Durham. The dinner was to honour and recognize the young leaders of our communities and leaders of the future.

I want to recognize the families and the schools and the recipients of this year's award, which include: Stephanie Ralston from Dr. G.J. MacGillivray Public School; Laura Humphreys and Rob Babikian from Courtyce Secondary School; Zachery Prescott from Clarke High School; Alexis Wilcox from Bowmanville High School; Teri-Lynn Kennedy from Holy Trinity Catholic school; Sophie Baron from Clarington secondary school; Tanya Irwin and Hailey Douglas from St. Stephen's Catholic secondary school; Jamie MacDonald and Mark Theriault from the Interact Club of Clarington; and Warren Heimstra from the Bowmanville Rotary Club.

The evening featured the renowned motivational and sports broadcaster Brian Williams. You may remember Mr. Williams, as he has covered 13 Canadian Olympics for Canada and now with CTV. He spoke to the youth about the lessons of greatness and the efforts that people make to be great and other sporting events.

The proceeds from last night's event will go to support the building of schools in Africa as well as community projects throughout Clarington.

I also want to thank the Courtyce Rotary Club and the other Rotary Clubs in the area, specifically President Sheila Hall and one of the main organizers, Marie Visser, for hosting the event. I'm proud to support this dinner and the youth in my riding who are our future leaders.

1310

SINGING CONTEST

Mr. Tony Ruprecht: We have great musical talent in our nation, and I am very delighted to make some introductions to this Legislature of the winners of the intercultural Canadian national singing contest. They are—if they would like to stand for a minute—Diana Richie, George Antoney, Melanie Frade, Julia Debowska, Olivia Amenta and Stephanie Wojtowicz. Of course, the founder of the contest is with us; his name is John Santos. The studio producer who is going to make a special effort to ensure they become famous national Canadian symbols is Hernani Raposo. Let's welcome them.

Last month, I and a thousand guests had the great pleasure to attend the intercultural Canadian national singing contest with John Santos. It was truly a Canadian multicultural event.

What I saw and experienced touched me deeply. The program was designed to showcase the real talent of each performer. Mr. Santos is an accomplished music director, and his wife, Lisa, set the stage for a most supportive backdrop.

John's music lifted the spirit of the performers to such heights, which enabled all of them to soar, to give their best and to give of themselves. The audience too was transformed into a supportive and appreciative cast.

The rhythmic music—sometimes soft, sometimes powerful, sometimes light and darkness—the colourful front and the uplifting, warm, melodious voices produced such a marvellous sound that time was forgotten and people didn't want to go home. They shouted, "More, more and more!" It was truly a night to remember.

These performers are here with us today, and they are our pride and joy, Mr. Speaker. They certainly deserve to be recognized for their enormous talent. You and I and our members will be delighted to provide some opportunity to them so they can launch their great careers. Congratulations to you.

YAD VASHEM

Mr. Mike Colle: I'd like to welcome the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem and their special guests here to

the Legislature. As you know, today we pay tribute to the Ontario Holocaust survivors who are here. The society's office is in my riding.

It just reinforced to me the incredible experience that—the Premier led a visit to Israel last year, where we visited Yad Vashem with my colleagues Monte Kwinter, David Zimmer, Minister Hoskins, and Sandra Pupatello, the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. We were really deeply moved by what we saw at Yad Vashem.

To have the Canadian society honour these incredible Canadians here today is doubly important, and it just makes me think how powerful a message it is that we shall never, ever forget, and we shall make sure that the voices of those innocent people who were murdered are never forgotten. Our special guests today are here for that.

I just want to say to all of these great Canadians who are here: We really treasure you, we love you, and we encourage you to keep speaking out for all of those innocent men, women and children who were murdered by those madmen back at a day we hope we will forget. Thank you so much.

YAD VASHEM

Mr. Dave Levac: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: the usual last statement. I seek unanimous consent of the House from all parties, and I believe we've spoken to each, for each party to have up to five minutes to speak about Yad Vashem.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Agreed? Agreed.

Mr. Monte Kwinter: In a ceremony at Queen's Park earlier today, we recognized and honoured 19 Holocaust survivors whose stories of anguish, suffering and survival of both body and spirit are a testimony to the human will to live.

These Holocaust survivors, who are in the House today—there they are, in the members' gallery—came to Ontario, rebuilt their lives and were honoured for their wonderful contributions as citizens of Ontario. Those honoured are Yael Gisela Spier Cohen, Irene (Blasz) Csillag, Valentin Drobner, Philip Epstein, John Freund, Magda Hilf, Howard Kleinberg, Nancy Kleinberg, Pepa Livingstone, Manja Mapa, Willie Moll, Rose Philip, Sally Rosen, Dr. Nadia Rosa, Leon Rucker, David Shentow, Jack (Szalom) Weinberger, Dr. Arthur Weisz, and Helen Yermus.

Today, we recognize Yom ha-Shoah V'Hagvurah, Holocaust Memorial Day—a day designated for Holocaust remembrance in communities around the world.

This is the 18th year that the Ontario Legislature has observed Holocaust Memorial Day, and I'm proud to say that Ontario was the first jurisdiction in the world, outside of the state of Israel, to officially recognize it.

Eighteen is a significant milestone in the Jewish faith. In Hebrew, it is "chai," which also translates into "life." As we mourn the death of the six million victims, we also celebrate the life of those who survived.

I have visited Yad Vashem, the Holocaust memorial and museum in Jerusalem, several times. Just a year ago, almost exactly, Premier Dalton McGuinty, Minister Sandra Pupatello, Minister Eric Hoskins, MPP Mike Colle, MPP David Zimmer and I were at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem and laid a wreath on behalf of all Ontarians in the Hall of Remembrance. The memorial is dedicated to preserving the memory and story of each of the six million people who died in the Holocaust. As a Jew, these memories strike the heart and the soul.

Every Jew is touched by the Holocaust. We lost loved ones, family members or friends. All members in the community lost someone. The Holocaust echoes through generations. The loss is extraordinary. At Yad Vashem, that loss is made real. It is concrete. You can touch it.

In the Valley of the Communities, you stand before wall after wall carved out of solid rock listing the names of more than 5,000 communities that lived, breathed, had life, in which men and women loved, married, raised children, worked, laughed and worshipped. Today, in most cases, nothing remains of these Jewish communities except for their names, forever frozen in the bedrock of Yad Vashem. It was there that I found the name of the city where my father was born, Częstochowa, and the city where my mother was born, Sosnowiec.

The Holocaust reaches out of the past and touches the shoulder of every Jew.

The central theme of Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day 2011 is Fragments of Memory: The Faces behind the Documents, Artifacts and Photographs. It focuses, in a graphic and visual way, the remembrance of the pre-war life that was, the unimaginable horror that was inflicted on the six million victims, and then the salvation and the hope for the future of the survivors.

Holocaust Memorial Day commemorates all who died in the Holocaust, not just Jews. We also remember those whom the Nazis targeted for their race, their religion, their politics, their disabilities or their sexual orientation.

It's important to set aside time to remember all these victims whose lives were taken by the Nazis. In remembering, we bear witness to what these men, women and children endured.

Tragically, other genocides have followed since World War II, in Cambodia, Rwanda, Darfur and in the former Yugoslavia.

It is evident that we must continue our struggle to keep alive the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was approved by the United Nations 63 years ago in the shadow of the Holocaust. The declaration recognized the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family as a foundation of freedom, justice and peace throughout the world. It called on the world to protect human rights by the rule of law.

We are indeed fortunate to live in Canada and in Ontario, but we must never take our good fortune for granted. We must guard our democratic institutions and democratic freedoms. We must appreciate, nurture and

protect them, and we must constantly remind ourselves how easy it is to lose them.

On Yom ha-Shoah, Jewish communities around the world recite a brief traditional mourner's prayer, the Kaddish. On the afternoon of May 1, some of our members were at Earl Bales Park for the annual Holocaust community commemoration service, and there were hundreds of people who recited the Kaddish.

On behalf of the victims, their survivors and their families, I would like to recite that Hebrew prayer that is something for which all people may pray, and I ask for unanimous consent to allow me to do that.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Agreed? Agreed.

All members please rise.

Prayer in Hebrew.

1320

Mr. Monte Kwinter: One line of this prayer translates as, "He who creates peace in His celestial heights, may He create peace for us."

We must always remember so that the world will never forget.

Mr. John O'Toole: On behalf of our leader, Tim Hudak, I'm very pleased today to extend our deepest sympathies to the 19 survivors who were honoured at the Yad Vashem memorial service today and to pay the deepest respect for their struggles and courage, as was described in the ceremony today.

We stand with you in the resentment of all of the victimization that Jewish people withstood during the Second World War. It reminds each of us of the responsibility to respect others and to respect the rights of individuals. It means to me—my sister Jane's husband, Dr. Paul Goodman, died just recently. Paul's family were from Russia and survived the Second World War, where his parents and their family were lost as a result of the Nazi victimization.

Today, we remember those who we are each touched by. We respect the struggles you have been through. Also, we respect the success—I read the stories of your lives here—and the courage to go forward in a positive way and the contributions you've made to Ontario and, indeed, Canada. It's remarkable. I commend you. Keep up the great work and the spirit and faith in people.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: It's an honour to stand and address you, an honour to be in the presence of survivors. It's an honour to remember those who did not. Certainly, on behalf of Andrea Horwath, the leader of the New Democratic Party, and all of us, this is a day of remembrance.

It's a day also of recommitment, I believe, that this must never, ever happen again. That means a recommitment to civil liberties. It means a recommitment to all having a voice. We know, as we heard already, that some of the first to be rounded up happen to be living in Parkdale—High Park right now: Roma people, gypsies as they were called. Socialists were rounded up, LGBT people were rounded up, and of course, six million Jews were also rounded up and sent to their death.

What's very sad about history since then, in a sense, is that what we forget is not only that this was perpetrated

by a group of psychopaths but that this was perpetrated by lots and lots of ordinary people. Elie Wiesel, in a wonderful work, talks about the banality of evil: the clerks who signed the forms, those who did nothing, the neighbours who watched as their neighbours were being carted away, those people who knew what the trains were carrying but turned the other way and did nothing and said nothing. That is where evil really resides. That's what we all have to recommit to struggling against because that same evil is still very present.

I want to tell you, as a United Church minister—this is my third career—I say mea culpa on behalf of all Christians. Only about 1% of Christians actually stood by their Jewish brothers and sisters during that period of time. I think of people like Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who paid with his life. Most of the churches sold you out. That is something that we need to deal with, that we need to look at every day in our own faith. So it has to do with us still.

In fact, the last time before today that I heard reference to the Holocaust was by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. I also have one of the largest Tibetan groups living in my riding. He said he looks to the Jews, really, and to your example, because they now are a community who live in diaspora, who have no homeland. They live in diaspora and because of the actions of China on their country, called Tibet, that isn't even on the map anymore. They see themselves in affiliation and also send their love.

Certainly, in working with them, we see the same old themes in humankind resurface: the themes of hatred, the themes of bigotry, the themes of the banality of evil, where good people do nothing and watch crimes perpetrated, sometimes because they are somewhere else and not here in our midst.

On behalf of all New Democrats, on behalf of all those who love civil liberties, on behalf of all those people of faith who hold to their faith and not to their religious institutions, to all of those people—to all of them—I say on behalf of us all, mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa. We are sorry, because we and our ancestors are also implicated in your story.

May this day always recur. May we always remember and, more than remember, may we recommit to it never, ever happening again.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly and move its adoption.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Grannum): Your committee begs to report the following bill without amendment:

Bill 188, An Act to amend the McMichael Canadian Art Collection Act / Projet de loi 188, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Collection McMichael d'art canadien.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed. The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

Report adopted.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Mr. Jim Brownell: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on General Government and move its adoption.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Grannum): Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 181, An Act to amend the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997 / Projet de loi 181, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur la prévention et la protection contre l'incendie.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed. The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

Report adopted.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

DRIVERS OVER THE AGE OF 80 IDENTIFICATION ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 EXIGEANT UN MOYEN D'IDENTIFICATION POUR LES CONDUCTEURS ÂGÉS DE PLUS DE 80 ANS

Mr. Sergio moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 201, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act to require vehicles driven by drivers over the age of 80 to display markers or identifying devices / Projet de loi 201, Loi modifiant le Code de la route pour exiger que les véhicules conduits par des conducteurs âgés de plus de 80 ans affichent des marques ou des moyens d'identification.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member for a short statement.

Mr. Mario Sergio: The bill amends the Highway Traffic Act to prohibit drivers who are over the age of 80 from driving a motor vehicle on a highway unless markers or identifying devices indicating that the motor vehicle is being driven by a driver who is over the age of 80 are displayed on the vehicle. Unless otherwise specified by regulation, the markers or identifying devices must depict "80 plus" in red and must be prominently

displayed and clearly visible from the front and rear of the motor vehicle.

1330

PROVINCIAL OFFENCES STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT (JURY TRIALS), 2011

LOI DE 2011 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE LES INFRACTIONS PROVINCIALES (PROCÈS DEVANT JURY)

Mr. Hillier moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 202, An Act respecting jury trials for provincial offences / Projet de loi 202, Loi concernant les procès devant jury dans le domaine des infractions provinciales.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member for a short statement.

Mr. Randy Hillier: This bill amends the Provincial Offences Act by allowing persons charged with an offence to choose to be tried by a court composed of a judge and jury, if any one of the following circumstances exist:

(1) The penalty for the offence includes a fine of \$25,000 or more, seizure of property or term of imprisonment.

(2) There is a reasonable likelihood that a conviction would result in termination or suspension of the person's professional licence or membership, or a licence or registration of business that is connected to the individual.

The jury is composed of 12 persons selected in accordance with the Juries Act. The jury is required to give a unanimous verdict. If the jury cannot agree, the judge may adjourn the trial or discharge the jury and direct the empanelling of a new jury. The jury may make recommendations relating to sentencing.

The Juries Act is amended to enable the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make regulations concerning the application of the act to a jury trial under the Provincial Offences Act.

PROVINCIAL OFFENCES AMENDMENT ACT (SENTENCING AND APPEALS), 2011

LOI DE 2011 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES INFRACTIONS PROVINCIALES (PRONONCÉ DE LA SENTENCE ET APPELS)

Mr. Hillier moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 203, An Act to amend the Provincial Offences Act with respect to sentencing and appeals / Projet de loi 203, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les infractions provinciales en ce qui concerne le prononcé de la sentence et les appels.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member for a short statement.

Mr. Randy Hillier: This bill amends the Provincial Offences Act to amend the default penalty for conviction of a provincial offence, if the law does not otherwise expressly provide it.

At present, the penalty is a fine of not more than \$5,000. The bill adds imprisonment as an alternative, at the choice of the convicted person. The court will determine the term of the imprisonment, which will be no more than six months. The bill also eliminates the requirement that a person who appeals a decision imposing a fine for a provincial offence must pay the fine in order to appeal the decision.

MOTIONS

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon. Margaret R. Best: I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Agreed? Agreed.

Hon. Margaret R. Best: I move that, notwithstanding standing order 98(b), the following change be made to the ballot list for private members' public business: Mr. Colle and Mr. Dhillon exchange places in order of precedence, such that Mr. Colle assumes ballot item 16 and Mr. Dhillon assumes ballot item 70; and that, notwithstanding standing order 98(g), notice for ballot item 16 be waived.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Hon. Margaret R. Best: I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding the meeting times for the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Agreed? Agreed.

Hon. Margaret R. Best: I move that the Standing Committee on Public Accounts be authorized to release reports during the summer adjournment by depositing a copy of any report with the Clerk of the Assembly.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon. Margaret R. Best: I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Agreed? Agreed.

Hon. Margaret R. Best: I move that during consideration of private members' public business this afternoon, in the event that Bill 185, An Act to proclaim British Home Child Day, receives second reading, the order for third reading shall immediately be called and the question put immediately, without debate or amendment.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Mr. John O'Toole: I'm pleased to present a petition on behalf of my constituents in the riding of Durham. The petition reads as follows:

"Whereas citizens are concerned that contaminants in materials used as fill for pits and quarries may endanger water quality and the natural environment of the greenbelt; and

"Whereas the Ministry of the Environment has a responsibility and a duty to protect the sensitive areas of the greenbelt and provincially sensitive wetlands; and

"Whereas the government of Ontario has the lead responsibility to provide the tools to lower-tier governments to plan, protect and enforce clear, effective policies governing the application and permitting process for the placement of fill in abandoned pits and quarries; and

"Whereas this process requires clarification regarding rules respecting what materials may be used to rehabilitate or fill abandoned pits and quarries;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, ask the Minister of the Environment to initiate a moratorium on the clean fill application and permit process on the greenbelt" and Oak Ridges Moraine "until there are clear rules; and we further ask that the provincial government take all necessary actions to protect our water and prevent contamination of the greenbelt, specifically at ... Regional Highway 2, Newcastle," often referred to as Morgans Road, "and Lakeridge Road in Durham."

I'm pleased to sign and support it and present it to Hamza, the page.

REPLACEMENT WORKERS

M^{me} France G  linas: I have a petition from people all over Ontario.

"Whereas strikes and lockouts are rare: 97% of collective agreements are settled without a strike or lockout; and

"Whereas anti-temporary replacement workers laws have existed in Quebec since 1978; in British Columbia since 1993; and successive governments in those two provinces have never repealed those laws; and

"Whereas anti-temporary replacement workers legislation has reduced the length and divisiveness of labour disputes; and

"Whereas the use of temporary replacement workers during a strike or lockout is damaging to the social fabric of a community in the short and the long term as well as the well-being of its residents;"

They petition the Legislative Assembly "to enact legislation banning the use of temporary replacement workers during a strike or lockout."

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask page Jonah to bring it to the Clerk.

PARAMEDICS

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas paramedics play a vital role in protecting the health and safety of Ontarians; and

"Whereas paramedics often put their own health and safety at risk, going above and beyond their duty in servicing Ontarians; and

"Whereas the government of Ontario annually recognizes police officers and firefighters with awards for bravery; and

"Whereas currently no award for paramedic bravery is awarded by the government of Ontario; and

"Whereas Ontario paramedics deserve recognition for acts of exceptional bravery while protecting Ontarians;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Enact Bill 115, a private member's bill introduced by MPP Maria Van Bommel on October 6, 2010, An Act to provide for the Ontario Award for Paramedic Bravery."

I will sign this petition and send it to the table with Lukian.

MATTHEWS HOUSE HOSPICE

Mr. Jim Wilson: A petition to address funding inequity for Matthews House Hospice in Alliston:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the number of clients served by Matthews House Hospice has doubled in less than three years, while funding provided by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care through the Central LHIN remains substantially unchanged; and

"Whereas Matthews House Hospice is the lowest-funded hospice in the Central LHIN and among the lowest-funded in the province, serving as many clients or more than others receiving substantially more money; and

"Whereas, in February 2010, Matthews House Hospice was promised a short-term and a long-term solution to its underfunding by the Central LHIN and that the long-term solution has not materialized; and

"Whereas, in January, Matthews House Hospice was told by the Central LHIN that any adjustment would have to come from the ministry, while two months later the

ministry informed Matthews House Hospice that it would have to work with the Central LHIN to solve its funding issues;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That" the McGuinty government "instruct the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care to appoint someone with authority to meet with the board representatives of Matthews House Hospice to resolve how they can get a just resolution for the people of south Simcoe needing hospice care, a resolution that ensures that their promise of a long-term solution is kept, giving them base funding equal to that of other hospices in Central LHIN."

I agree with the petition, and I will sign it.

1340

TAXATION

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition from the people of Val Caron, in my riding.

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Be it resolved that the government of Mr. McGuinty immediately exempt electricity from the harmonized sales tax."

I agree with this petition, will affix my name to it and ask Erica to bring it to the Clerk.

DOG OWNERSHIP

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas aggressive dogs are found among all breeds and mixed breeds; and

"Breed-specific legislation has been shown to be an expensive and ineffective approach to dog bite prevention; and

"Problem dog owners are best dealt with through education, training and legislation encouraging responsible behaviour;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To repeal the breed-specific sections of the Dog Owners' Liability Act (2005) and to implement legislation that encourages responsible ownership of all dog breeds and types."

Thank you very much for allowing me to present this petition.

RURAL SCHOOLS

Mr. Jim Wilson: "Petition to Save Duntroon Central Public School and All Other Rural Schools in Clearview Township:

"Whereas Duntroon Central Public School is an important part of Clearview township and the surrounding area; and

"Whereas Duntroon Central Public School is widely recognized for its high educational standards and intimate learning experience; and

"Whereas the frameworks of rural schools are different from urban schools and therefore deserve to be governed by a separate rural school policy; and

"Whereas Premier Dalton McGuinty promised during the 2007 election that he would keep rural schools open when he declared that, 'Rural schools help keep communities strong, which is why we're not only committed to keeping them open—but strengthening them'; and

"Whereas" Premier "Dalton McGuinty found \$12 million to keep school swimming pools open in Toronto but hasn't found any money to keep rural schools open in Simcoe-Grey;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Premier Dalton McGuinty and the Minister of Education support the citizens of Clearview township and suspend the Simcoe County District School Board ARC 2010:01 until the province develops a rural school policy that recognizes the value of schools in the rural communities of Ontario."

I agree with the petition and I will sign it.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS AMENDMENT ACT (COMMENCEMENT OF TERM OF OFFICES DATE), 2011

LOI DE 2011 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES ÉLECTIONS MUNICIPALES (DATE DE COMMENCEMENT DES MANDATS)

Mr. Lalonde moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 153, An Act to amend the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 to change the date on which the term of offices begins and to make related amendments / *Projet de loi 153, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1996 sur les élections municipales pour changer la date de commencement des mandats et apporter des modifications connexes.*

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

M. Jean-Marc Lalonde: Monsieur le Président, c'est avec grand plaisir que je vous présente en deuxième lecture le projet de loi 153, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1996 sur les élections municipales pour changer la date de commencement des mandats et apporter des modifications connexes.

Comme nous le savons tous, après les dernières élections municipales qui ont eu lieu le 25 octobre 2010, les nouveaux élus sont entrés en fonction à compter du

1^{er} décembre 2010, ou après avoir été assermentés après cette date.

Ayant reçu plusieurs appels des nouveaux élus, des membres défaits, des candidats défaits, des administrateurs, des commettants, ainsi que des autres conseils municipaux qui m'ont fait parvenir des résolutions, dont celle surtout de la municipalité Central Elgin—j'aurai la chance de la lire un peu plus tard—j'ai cru bon de présenter ce projet de loi.

Si les modifications sont adoptées, les nouveaux conseils municipaux commenceraient leur mandat le deuxième lundi de novembre de l'année des élections ordinaires. Mon projet de loi permettrait une période de transition plus courte qui serait de 16 jours au lieu de 35 jours. Je veux donc clarifier que, oui, l'entrée en fonction d'un conseil nouvellement élu serait le deuxième lundi de novembre.

I decided to bring forward Bill 153 after getting phone calls and meetings with mayors, members of council, municipal administrators and constituents, and also resolutions that I received from quite a few municipalities. I could read the one that I got from Central Elgin:

"Whereas the Municipal Elections Act was amended to change the date of municipal elections from the second Monday in November to the fourth Monday of October; and

"Whereas this change in date also potentially lengthened the period when council may be restricted from taking certain actions under the Municipal Act"—the lame-duck period in this case was 81 days, because after the nomination date, which was September 10, municipal councils were limited in the position they could take at that time.

"Now, therefore, be it resolved that the council of the Corporation of the Municipality of Central Elgin request that the Municipal Elections Act and the Municipal Act be amended to provide for a date in November when the newly elected council shall take office, and that a copy of this resolution be" sent to MPPs—yes, Mr. Speaker, telling me that the time between a municipal election and the date on which the newly elected council takes office is simply too long. Constituents who have municipal questions don't know who to turn to. Many will contact both the outgoing and incoming mayor, and the files often get lost.

It used to be that the transition time for municipal elections was much shorter. Municipal elections were held on the second Monday in November, and the newly elected council could take office on December 1—a 16-day time frame—much shorter than today. Today we have a 36-day time frame.

I met with Peter Hume, the president of AMO, and he said he was very supportive of these changes.

This bill would bring two major changes to the Municipal Elections Act:

(1) Bill 153, if passed, will amend the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, to change the date on which newly elected councils take office following municipal elections, from December 1 to the second Monday in November, in the year of a regular election.

(2) The bill also amends the act to reduce the time frame within which recounts of votes must be completed.

With respect to recounts: Instead of having 30 days after the election results to pass a resolution requiring a recount, the municipality/local board would have 10 days; after the election results, recounts must be done within seven days instead of 15 days; and application for recounts shall be commenced within 10 days after the election results, rather than 30 days. If no application has been made for a judicial recount under section 63, the clerk shall, on the eighth day after the recount is completed—instead of on the 16th day—declare the successful candidate. A person who disputes the validity of a ballot or of the counting of votes may, within seven days after the clerk announces the results, apply to the Superior Court of Justice for recount of the disputed ballots—instead of 15 days.

There are a few points that are very important. There are presently restrictions placed on councils after nomination day. As I said, in the past election, nomination day was September 10. These restrictions can last the entire lame-duck period of 81 days. These don't always apply. It depends on the nature of the makeup of the outgoing/incoming council. But the united counties of Prescott-Russell have said they can be quite limiting. I will list a few of the restrictions:

The actions referred to in subsection (1) are: (1) the appointment or removal from office of any officer of the municipality; (2) the hiring or dismissal of any employee of the municipality; (3) the disposition of any real or personal property of the municipality which has a value exceeding \$50,000 at the time of disposal; and (4) making any expenditure or incurring any other liability which exceeds \$50,000. This is exactly the reason why I have tabled this bill: to make those corrections so it would be much easier for a municipality's administrator.

1350

At the time, I could give you some good examples. There were major companies that tried to benefit from that lame-duck period. They came into council. There was nobody to take decisions; there was only the clerk. The clerk got in touch with me: "What should I be doing?" I had to meet both parties at one point, saying, "No, you'll have to wait until the new municipal council has been sworn in before you take your position."

Remember one thing: When we say "sworn in," the date is December 1, but I've seen many councils where the swearing-in ceremony took effect on December 6. This council was not in power until they were all sworn in. If one of them is not sworn in, if it is a five-member council, only four could take their positions at that time.

Again, I'll be asking for the support of all three parties of this House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: It's certainly a pleasure to contribute to the debate here today on Bill 153. I want to begin by commending the member for Glengarry–Prescott–Russell for bringing this bill forward. Many

members of this Legislature have considerable experience at the municipal level, but there are few, if any, who can match this member's extensive record. Having served in municipal government for 25 years, 15 years as mayor of Rockland, the member is uniquely qualified to draw on his lengthy record of municipal service to propose constructive and beneficial reforms to the Municipal Elections Act.

In fact, I know that his term as an MPP is coming to an end, and I want to take the opportunity to personally congratulate him on the work that he has undertaken on behalf of his constituents and the people of this province. Since I have known him, he has always served all of those people with honour, with distinction and in a very professional manner. I would always say you've always been nothing but a true gentleman, and I shall miss you.

The issue that has been brought forward by the member is one that should be addressed, and I'm pleased to be able to support it. I've talked to people on the councils at home. Municipal governments do have an integral role to play in our province, and I do believe and support the member in that that should happen in a speedy and efficient transition of power from one council to the next.

The five-week period between the election and the swearing-in of the new council is simply too long. As has been pointed out, it results in a protracted and unnecessarily long lame-duck stage that hurts the ability of municipal governments to act in the best interests of their communities.

I'm not going to go on much longer, because I know my colleague the member for Leeds–Grenville has much that he wants to add to this discussion. I would simply say it is important that we respect democracy, the will of the people, and make the transition as quickly as possible. This bill strengthens democracy, and it does ensure that the voters are governed by the people they have elected. I encourage all members of this House to give this bill speedy passage.

Again, in conclusion, I say to the member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, thank you for a job extremely well done.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I want to join the member from Kitchener–Waterloo in her praise of the member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell. It's timely. It's a good way to say a few kind words about mon ami Jean-Marc. He's got an impeccable reputation. He is a very sincere individual, and you could see that in the way he does social politics with people. He's a very gentle man and, indeed, a gentleman. I wanted to take that opportunity to say that as well of Jean-Marc Lalonde.

I take this opportunity because it's difficult to find 12 minutes to speak to a bill that I agree with, because often, when I agree with a bill, I say, "Okay, I agree"; you sit down and you just want to move on because it makes so much sense. I don't quite understand how it is that council members can be elected on October 25 and take

office December 1. The member from Eglinton–Lawrence might know; I don’t really understand it. Why such a long period between when you get elected and when you take office? There must be some reasoning that I cannot fathom, and somebody will speak to it for sure. I fail to see the logic, because that transitional period, in my mind, as the member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell has said and many of the people who wrote to him have said, just simply doesn’t make any sense.

To make that transition a lot faster and seamless is useful, and this is what the bill does. It’s a bit late in the session, obviously. We’re heading into an election. I’m not quite sure the Premier is worried about these things at this time; I understand. But it’s a bill that could be passed quickly in order to deal with the next municipal election. On the other hand, if it doesn’t pass this time, we can do it again, and somebody will take the torch from Jean-Marc, the member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, and re-present the bill—it could happen.

But I find that what he has submitted today is reasonable, including the other part of the bill, which would reduce the time frame within which recounts of votes must be completed. That too makes sense. Why such a long delay of recounts? Again, the member from Eglinton–Lawrence might have some reasoning behind it in terms of what municipal councillors thought or what previous governments might have thought about why the delay, but reducing that time frame makes sense. Everybody, both those who thought they won and those who lost who think they ought to have won, gets a quick resolution and a quick solution to the problem.

Jean-Marc, member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, mon ami, it’s a good bill. It will pass today; I have no doubt. Whether the government will simply try to convince the other two parties that this is something we could go ahead—I think it could, so I hope it happens.

I wish you good health. I hope you spend a lot more time with the wife—

Mr. Mike Colle: She wants him out.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: No, no. My suspicion is that she would like to spend a little time with him. Or am I wrong?

Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde: It’s true.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Because there are things you can do together, obviously. One of the things that I hope you will do together is do a lot more walking than you’ve been doing, because in this place, a whole lot of people sit on their you-know-what too much of the time—except those who are in good shape. You can tell those who are in good shape, who find the time to run for hours, destroying their backs and their heels as they pound on the ground to stay fit. But better that than to be sedentary and suffer the ill effects of not doing very much. So I hope you do a lot of that in your retirement. Merci, monsieur le Président.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Merci. Further debate?

Mr. Steve Clark: It’s a pleasure for me to add a few remarks on Bill 153 and the member for Glengarry–Prescott–Russell.

First of all, I’m going to talk just briefly about the bill. I was working in municipal government when these changes were passed. I have to tell you, they were passed just before the deadline, so that candidates started to declare January 1, and this bill, I think, was passed in the middle of December 2009. I have to tell you, being a chief administrative officer at the time, I and the other CAOs and clerks wondered what the deal was with this huge lame-duck period that took place.

1400

Normally, as the member opposite knows—we were both former mayors—in the old days, your election day was the second Monday in November, and you took office very close to December 1. You had a special short inaugural meeting. Obviously it didn’t take place on a Saturday or Sunday, but you were very close to December 1. It was a very short period of time.

In fact, I was elected MPP last March, only to learn that I was an MPP on March 4, the day I was elected. Even though I had to wait for my name to get published in the Gazette before I could actually sit in the chamber, I was an MPP the day I was elected, not like municipal councillors, where you get elected and then you have to wait. Others have that period. So, as some would say, this is a no-brainer when it comes to a recommendation.

The only other problem is that there are other changes that need to be made as well. In my own community I’ve had several councillors go to the judge to get reinstated because they didn’t file their election expenses on time. There were a couple in the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke’s riding who were acclaimed and thought that they didn’t have to file because they incurred no expenses. They then had to go to the judge and pay \$2,000 for their legal costs and get reinstated.

This has happened over and over again. In the township of Athens council in my riding, all the candidates had to be reinstated because there were medical issues. The CAO’s father—who was a great man; Don Brontmire, a former municipal councillor himself—was in ill health and ultimately passed away, and they were unable to file with the clerk.

Really the intent of the election law wasn’t to make people go to the judge. It wasn’t to have people elected on November 25 and then take office December 1 or December 6. The bill was just brought in as part of an omnibus bill—I think it was a 200-plus-page bill that amended 600 different acts—so there are things to change.

I spoke the other day to Pat Vanini, the executive director for AMO. I was president of AMO in 1989, and my executive director at the time was Mac Dunbar. Many people in municipal politics would know Mac, and obviously everyone in provincial politics now knows Pat Vanini. I think they agree that there need to be changes; changes like those proposed today from the member for Glengarry–Prescott–Russell; changes that should be done, not weeks before nominations open for the next municipal election, but early.

Whichever government takes the reins of power on October 6, they should make this change. They should

bring this change that's in Bill 153 forward; they should bring changes so that people don't have to go before a judge. If you or I or any of the members here didn't file their expenses on time, we could apply to have a 60-day extension. We wouldn't lose our seats immediately and be ineligible to run four years from now.

Some people in my riding say, "Why aren't the penalties the same for municipal councillors as they are for us as provincial politicians?" I hope that the changes that I've talked about and the changes that Monsieur Lalonde talks about in this bill get changed early on. I commend him for this bill. I will support second reading on this bill.

I want to close talking about mon ami Jean-Marc, because he and I were mayors in eastern Ontario. I was the mayor of Brockville and he was the mayor of Rockland. When I was elected to this place, he came up to me—because a lot was made about my age being 22 when I was a mayor—and he asked me how old I was, and I said, "Jean-Marc, I'm almost 50." Now I am 50. He said, "Do you still play hockey?" I said, "Yes." He said, "You're on the Legiskaters hockey team." He has a fabulous hockey mind, probably one of the best hockey minds I've met in eastern Ontario—probably in all of Ontario. I still contend that I'm probably the only player he has ever signed without a tryout, and seeing the record then of the Legiskaters, I knew why. The first game we played we won, and I think it was announced four or five times in the Legislature that day. Unknown to me, it was the first game we had won in three years.

I do want to say that under your direction, we had a great tribute for you here on the second floor for your efforts with the Legiskaters hockey team, and there were a lot of people whom you have worked with and played with who give you a tribute. I see your staff in the gallery; they're so loyal to you and such wonderful staff. I'm glad that they're here for this bill discussion today.

We've gone through a lot, you and I. One of the stories that the Speaker brought up was on the famous 1988 Olympics. When he and I were both mayors, Jean-Marc invited me down to a celebration in his riding. That's when I found out that he went to the bishop, got the Olympic flame and put it into the bishop's hands. That's how we had the torch. So we snagged a little bit of that flame for our own use in eastern Ontario. That just shows the resourcefulness of Jean-Marc Lalonde.

In closing, I want to talk about Jean-Marc as a friend. I talked about his hockey knowledge; it is legendary, at all levels of hockey in eastern Ontario. He is a former coach of Guy Lafleur; I am certainly nowhere near Monsieur Lafleur's talent.

Up until the Pembroke Lumber Kings won the Royal Bank Cup, just a few weeks ago, Jean-Marc's Rockland Nationals were the only central junior hockey team to ever aspire to that level, and it was under his direction. A couple of years after they won the cup, the Nationals faded away. Our arena in Brockville, the roof collapsed, so our team, the Brockville Braves, had to be relocated. Jean-Marc, being the resourceful mayor and the

resourceful hockey mind, offered the Brockville Braves, then renamed the Rockland Ramparts—I think that was the name we had for our time in Rockland—but it was this person, Jean-Marc Lalonde, the member for Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, who I've known for many years.

I have to tell you, in eastern Ontario, there are few politicians who garner the love from all political stripes that Jean-Marc Lalonde has. He has the respect of all of eastern Ontario for his efforts, for his work, for his vision.

I want to thank him very much for providing this bill and providing his leadership in eastern Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: I want to rise as did my colleague from Trinity–Spadina to say thank you to the member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, who the Speaker will allow us to call Jean-Marc for the purposes of debate this afternoon.

Needless to say, we're supporting the bill. I think everybody's supporting this bill. That's not the question here. The question is, we're going to miss you. I wanted to add my own story to the stories that we've heard. It has to do with the Legiskaters, except not for your prowess as a hockey coach and player—thank you for doing the Legiskaters—but for your real human kindness where my husband is concerned. I know Gil sends his best.

My husband—many were in the House when this happened—went to play with the Legiskaters and had a heart attack. It was a mild one. But what was interesting about that experience, among many other things, is that, as he was lying in the dressing room—we didn't know what was wrong at that point; it could have been stomach upset, who knows?—there was one person who stayed with him until I was able to get there, and his family was able to get there. That was our friend Jean-Marc Lalonde. He stayed right to the end, made sure he was okay and made sure we got to the hospital. That's the kind of man he is. And he was the first to ask me when I came back to the House, "How's your husband doing?"

Just so you know, Gil's doing fine. He's playing hockey again. It makes me sweat, but he's doing it. He will play with the Legiskaters. He loves the game, just like you do. He will be playing it while there's still a breath in his body.

But I want to thank you on behalf of our family, Jean-Marc, for your assistance and for your care that day. It goes beyond politics and beyond this place. It's just called human. Thank you for being so human.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mr. Mike Colle: Yes, I was frightened when I heard the member from Parkdale–High Park talk about heart attacks and hockey because I was also dragooned into playing hockey one day a few years ago at Varsity Arena. I sort of shied away, although I'm still playing a little bit.

But, Jean-Marc, to me, this bill represents that this is a man who never stops, perpetual motion for the public

good. I know people from all sides know that. I've had the pleasure of trying to be with him for a day or so. I just can't believe the driving he does from Hawkesbury to Vankleek Hill to St. Albert. He knows every store, every person, every seniors' home, everybody who has ever played or coached minor hockey, every restaurant, gas station. They all know Jean-Marc.

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I think that if one were to do a video about a model MPP, how to be an MPP, you would just do it on Jean-Marc, but I don't think many people could keep up. This is seven days a week, and he takes everything to heart. It's not just a job, a routine; he is passionate about everything he takes on. He just never stops. Those of you across the way who have talked to him can see that it's never-ending compassion, passion and caring for the people he represents or the people we represent.

I've had the pleasure of being at the Highland games in Maxville. What an extravaganza that is, Jean-Marc. Again, as you're driving along the highway, he talks about, "Well, you know, we have a water problem, a sewage problem here, this road has got to be fixed, that hydro has got to be dealt with"—never-ending work that he does for his constituency. I just can't say enough.

The work he does for the francophone community and francophone parliamentarians is something that has really shaped Jean-Marc's career. It just burns Jean-Marc when he goes to an event in some other country and the Quebec delegation is there, and they say, "Well, we are the francophone delegation. We represent the francophonie in Canada, la francophonie dans le monde," and Jean-Marc says, "Hey, wait a minute. We have a francophone community in Ontario that's huge, over a million and a half at least." So, Jean-Marc is there trying to say that in Ontario we have all these wonderful people of the French language and French heritage, and their roots are as old as the roots on the Quebec side.

He represents an area of Ontario that is really underrated. It's one of the oldest areas. They have incredible history and incredible culture. It's a small-town culture on the Ottawa River with an incredible lifestyle. Everything they do there is really unique. It's an area on the other side of Ottawa that people don't visit enough. I think if Jean-Marc needs a new career, we've got to make him the unofficial grand pooh-bah of Outaouais, the great area of Rockland and Casselman and those wonderful communities.

I hope he continues—the member from Trinity-Spadina says his wife wants him at home. I don't know; he cannot stay in the house. I don't know if he even stays in the house for a coffee; he's probably out the door and down the road to have a coffee. So I don't know how she's going to keep him in the house.

Anyway, I just want to say that I think this bill is essential. It really struck me this time, with the change in date of the election, that it was unnecessary to have such a lag. The people who vote phone up their newly elected council and ask for help, and the councillor says, "I can't help you for five weeks." You can imagine what the citi-

zen says when he phones the mayor's office or the newly elected councillor or the newly elected school trustee: "Sorry, I can't do anything for five weeks." Sometimes it's six weeks, because there's a delay if all the inaugurations are not done on December 1. The citizens are not well served; they think the newly elected councillor is giving them the runaround. They don't believe it.

So it is about accountability. It's about getting rid of this unnecessary lame-duck period. I've asked for the rationale behind it, and I just cannot find a rationale for it.

I think that as these things take place, we need to do a constant review. Luckily, we've got four years before the next election, and hopefully it will be fixed before then, along with a couple of other wrinkles we need to iron out in terms of the Municipal Act. With Jean-Marc's leadership, we'll be able to take care of these things.

Again, thank you very much for bringing this forward, Jean-Marc. You're a mensch, you're a gran señor, you're a true, wonderful Ontarian who has his heart with the people. Merci beaucoup, mon ami Jean-Marc.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: I'm not going to speak much about this bill either, I'm going to tell you upfront.

Obviously, having a municipal background as well, I know how important this is. I remember going through an amalgamation when I became mayor of a new municipality and the struggle we had to get over the lame-duck period. As we heard from members from all sides, this is really a no-brainer. So, Jean-Marc, the people who get re-elected are going to be here after October 6. I'm sure they'll do whatever they can to push this through.

I'm just going to take a minute or so to say a couple of things on a personal note. There's a few wishes, Jean-Marc, that I hope would happen. I know some of them are impossible. One, I wish you'd reconsider, but I'm not sure that, with your plans, that's in the making. That's my number one wish, a priority, and I'll tell you why in a minute. Secondly, if you do decide to leave, which you probably have already, please leave us your energy, because I'm not sure where you find that energy to do what you do every day.

I had the pleasure about three years ago, after the election, to work with Jean-Marc on the parameters of a new fund we established for eastern Ontario. We travelled a little bit together. We met with a number of people.

We're all here for the right reason—for the betterment of our communities—but there are some people who just go above and beyond that, and Jean-Marc is one of those folks.

Jean-Marc, we're going to miss you, and the people of your riding are going to miss you, because I know your commitment, and in the few things that we did together, or you did here—when you grab hold of something, you don't let go. I just wish you, in ending here, and your family a well-rested retirement—I know you're not going to stop—from this place, and enjoy every day of your life. Thanks very much.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mr. Dave Levac: It was said that nobody wants to talk about the bill, so I will only talk about the bill. I'm just teasing because I can't resist, in the few minutes that I've got left, to talk about my friend and colleague and mentor, I would suggest to you, respectfully, Jean-Marc Lalonde.

Bill 153 does make some changes that are very important, and I will make these quick points about the bill. I've already spoken to AMO as well. They concur with your findings, Jean-Marc Lalonde. I will also tell you that I made contact with the outgoing mayor who retired from my community in Brantford, who asked me the very same question. He didn't even criticize the government. He just said, "It's one of those things where people didn't find the final details that would necessarily have a problem."

When you look at it—81 days—look at all the things that could happen during those 81 days. An expenditure of over \$50,000 is easy to come by in a quick decision that needs to be made by council, and they can't make it. They could lose opportunities for job creation; they could lose opportunities for an expenditure for the betterment of the community. Yes, indeed, we need to shorten that time period.

I agree with my friend from Leeds-Grenville. Let's take a look at other things that could be done in order for us to avoid the complexity and confusion, and that's basically what we had. The incoming mayor made the same kinds of comments, indicating a willingness that this bill should be passed and encouraging everyone to do it.

The lame-duck period does have a purpose. Our council ended up in a lame-duck situation where more people left and didn't come in, so newbies come in, and because of that circumstance—that's why they thought their experience and expertise should bring them to that point. I think there should still be a lame-duck period, but for goodness' sake, it should not be 81 days. The councillors I've spoken to concur with that as well in both communities that I represent.

Let me finish by saying to my friend, in an extremely respectful way, that I admire him immensely. He's the kind of guy who, when he comes back, everyone will be able to shake hands with him and say, "It's really nice to see you because when you dealt with us, you dealt with us as people. You dealt with us as somebody who had an idea. If you put an idea out there, and somebody else came to it, Jean-Marc Lalonde would make a decision, 'That's not right. Let's work together to fix it.'"

I'll tell you something else that I've learned about him. It's not Ontario, it's not Quebec; it's Canada. He's got relationships with people in the United States as well. This is a gentleman who is admired in Quebec almost as much as he's admired in Ontario.

Why? Because at the last event we went to together with the Ontario-Quebec parliamentarians, they gave him a rousing send-off: the Speaker of the House, the elected members from all parties, and individuals who knew that his purpose was to make things right for everybody.

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The connection that he has made between the franco-phone community and the English community is a testament to his capacity to be a good person. I admire him. I respect him. I consider him a role model for myself. I don't fit that bill as well as I know I should, but I will tell you this: I will continue to be as much about Jean-Marc Lalonde as I can, because I see him as a person who does nothing but work for his community.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Seeing none, the honourable member, Monsieur Lalonde, you have two minutes for your response.

Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde: First of all, I have to say that I'm going to miss you all. You can rest assured of that.

I want to thank the member from Kitchener-Waterloo. I never forgot the day that I got up—I was on the opposition side—and I thanked her for all the good work that she had done for labour mobility at the time, in 1996. I guess most of you know that when it comes down to supporting development, economic development or anything that would help communities, I would support and I would work, and I never look at the colour.

Trinity-Spadina: Rosario, as I told you before, my wife really loves watching you on television.

Leeds-Grenville: Thank you very much, Steve. Thank you, thank you, really. You touched two points. We've known each other for quite a few years, and I know that the work that I did in this chamber was for the good of all Ontarians.

Parkdale-High Park: Thank you very much. And yes, I had your husband come back to play for us, and the game is not over yet.

Eglinton-Lawrence: I have to say that you're absolutely right. I've learned through my 16 years—it's going to be 16 years next month—that we have to listen to the people. Why did I bring up that bill? It's because the people have approached me to bring up a change in the Legislature. This is exactly why I have to listen to the people. I do drive around quite often.

I don't want to forget my friends Northumberland-Quinte West and Brant.

I will definitely miss all the people, and I enjoyed every single minute of it that I worked here. I will be still continuing to work for the Ontario people.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): The time for Mr. Lalonde's ballot item has expired. We'll vote on his bill in about 100 minutes.

BANNING COLLUSION IN ELECTORAL ADVERTISING ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 INTERDISANT LA COLLUSION DANS LE CADRE DE LA PUBLICITÉ ÉLECTORALE

Mr. Arnott moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 195, An Act to amend the Election Finances Act to ban collusion in electoral advertising / Projet de loi

195, Loi modifiant la Loi sur le financement des élections pour interdire la collusion dans le cadre de la publicité électorale.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Pursuant to standing order 98, the honourable member has 12 minutes for his presentation. Mr. Arnott.

Mr. Ted Arnott: I'm pleased to have this opportunity to speak about my private member's bill, Bill 195, the Banning Collusion in Electoral Advertising Act, and why it's needed to ensure fairness and transparency in our provincial election campaigns.

As Canadians, we rightly value—indeed, we treasure—our democratic rights. Willingly we carry out our responsibilities as citizens in a democratic society. In one of his seminal fireside chats, the wartime President of the United States, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, told Americans, “We must be the great arsenal of democracy.” Yes, Franklin Roosevelt was an American, but I think it's interesting to point out that he spent countless summers at Campobello Island in New Brunswick, where his family had a summer home. He was the most Canadian of US Presidents. I'm sure there was no other American President in history who spent more of his life on Canadian soil than FDR.

In our own time and in our own context, we might discuss the arsenals of democracy in a different way. Money, as we know, is needed to sustain our arsenal of democracy. In Ontario, each campaign needs some of the financial resources of its supporters to purchase the signs, to pay for the phones, to fund the leader's tour, to print and distribute pamphlets and to buy advertising. Campaign advertising, of course, is one of the biggest expenses, and as we know, television advertising is very, very expensive.

In order to maintain the fairness of our elections, we have established spending limits. We have them, among other reasons, so that well-funded special interests cannot determine the outcome of elections, so that big money cannot buy an election. We have campaign spending limits so that one party cannot gain an unfair advantage by flooding the airwaves with advertising to the point that the other parties and other perspectives are unable to compete. I believe these limits are necessary and in the public interest.

We believe, and we assert, that the Ontario Liberal Party has attempted to gain such unfair advantage through an alliance with the so-called Working Families Coalition. In the last two provincial elections, the Working Families Coalition has funded multi-million-dollar ad campaigns attacking the Ontario PC Party, its leaders and its candidates, we believe to the direct benefit of the Ontario Liberal Party. We suspect they'll do it again this fall if given the chance.

But who are these so-called working families? Do all of its members and contributors agree with their tactics?

My wife, Lisa Arnott, has been a public school teacher for some 25 years. Accordingly, she is a member of the Ontario elementary school teachers' federation, which I understand is one of the contributors to the Working

Families Coalition. My wife supports me, and she votes for me—as far as I know, secret ballots being another factor in our democratic system. But it appears that some of Lisa's union dues are dedicated, against her wishes, to the cause of my defeat and that of my colleagues. At our house, we don't think that's fair. It's wrong, and it's one of the reasons I became interested in this issue.

If Lisa worked in the Catholic system instead of the public system, it appears she would be compelled to pay even more to support efforts to fund my defeat. This year, the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association decided to extract an extra \$60 from each of its members to fund a \$3-million war chest for its own campaign to support the Liberals. That's in addition to what that union is doing to support the Working Families Coalition.

How many of their members, and how many members of other unions, have had their union dues taken away from them, without their consent, to fund political advertising to support a party that they as individuals do not support? This is one of the fundamental questions that the government has yet to address.

Let's look at the organizations that comprise the Working Families Coalition. This was taken off the Working Families website this morning: Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association; Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation; Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario; Ontario Nurses' Association; Canadian Auto Workers; International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Local 128; International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; millwrights; International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 793; painters' district council 46; Ontario Pipe Trades Council; Service Employees International Union.

Again, these organizations have every right to participate in the election, and their members individually have every right to support whoever they want. But do they have the right to collude with one political party, co-ordinating their advertising to support that political party, to get around the campaign spending limits that the other parties must obey by law? I submit that they do not.

I've been fortunate to have another private member's ballot item at this late date in the 39th Parliament. Given that we're in the lead-up to a provincial election, I wanted to take this opportunity to draw attention to this important issue that may have a significant impact on that election: giving one party a significant and unfair advantage over the others.

If passed, my Bill 195 would ban collusion between a political party and a third party—in other words, an external organization—for the purposes of advertising in an election campaign.

Canadian Press reports that Working Families and other so-called third parties currently “have no limits on the amount they can spend supporting or attacking a political candidate or party during an election, while the parties themselves are limited to total campaign spending of approximately \$8 million this year.”

For the Liberal Party to be able to get around these spending limits would, of course, for them, be hugely

advantageous. It is my understanding that officials from Working Families and the Ontario Liberal Party maintain that there are no connections between their respective organizations. If that is true, we would submit that the Liberals in this House would have no good reason to oppose this bill. If they do oppose our efforts, it would be a very clear indication that there are, in fact, links between Working Families and the Ontario Liberals and, we suggest, possibly collusion.

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On May 7, 2009, the Select Committee on Elections met to consider issues pertaining to advertising during elections. The committee heard from Mr. Greg Essensa, who serves as the Chief Electoral Officer of Ontario. Mr. Essensa told the committee that he believes “that a review and update of Ontario’s election finance laws is warranted.”

He also explained that under current law, third parties are free to co-operate and coordinate their efforts with recognized parties. I quote Mr. Essensa’s remarks from Hansard:

“There is no specific provision that prohibits a third party from co-operating or coordinating its advertising with either a political party or one of its candidates, provided that the party/candidate is not actually controlling the third party’s advertising.”

To be clear, I don’t dispute the right of external organizations—or individuals, for that matter—to speak or advertise for or against any political party or candidate. That is their right and it must be protected. But if they deliberately conspire with another political party, especially when they do so simply to get around our election spending laws, we maintain that that’s wrong.

In cases of collusion, third party organizations should be prepared to face scrutiny, and their spending limits should have to come within the party’s existing spending limits. Mr. Essensa tells us that there are already more stringent requirements in place federally and in British Columbia, New Brunswick and Quebec and that there were also regulations being proposed in Alberta at the time of his testimony.

Again I quote Mr. Essensa’s testimony from Hansard: “It is, or will be, an offence in these jurisdictions to collude for the purposes of circumventing spending limits for political parties, candidates and third parties.” Similarly, Bill 195 would seek to ensure that there can be no collusion between third parties and political parties. It also extends the limit that section 38 of the Election Finances Act imposes on campaign expenses incurred by a registered party and persons or bodies acting on its behalf during a campaign period to include advertising expenses incurred by a third party during a campaign period if the third party acted with the express or implied knowledge and consent of a registered political party.

If the McGuinty Liberals are so sure that there is no collusion between Working Families and the Ontario Liberal Party, logically, they should support this bill. But if they don’t support it, fair-minded people will wonder, “What do they have to hide?”

People also need to realize that this issue goes well beyond Working Families and what we believe may well be their efforts to collude with the Liberal Party in the election this fall. This issue goes far beyond that. We must consider not only Working Families but also other external organizations with undue capacity to influence the outcome of elections, the election of 2011 and many more elections, perhaps, to come.

Mr. Speaker, you and I have served in this Legislature long enough to see things come full circle. I can recall that during the late 1980s, the Ontario Secondary School Teachers’ Federation was furious with the Liberal government of David Peterson. At that time, teachers were very concerned with the management of their pension plan. The teachers’ union wanted 50% control of the board of the teachers’ pension plan, but the Liberals refused.

When OSSTF went public with their concerns, Premier Peterson, I recall, dismissed them, calling them “silly.” That was the word that he used. I recall that the teachers’ federation leaders were inflamed by this and decided to mobilize their members against the Liberals. So, in advance of the 1990 election—my very first election—the teachers’ unions were working hard to defeat the Liberal government of the day. My recollection is that instructions from union headquarters came down urging teachers to get involved in the election and get behind the candidate in each riding who seemed to have the best chance to defeat the Liberal candidate.

My point is this: We don’t know what the political landscape will be like in five years, 10 years or even 20 years. What we do know is that when it comes to our democracy, the people of Ontario rightly expect us to uphold the highest standards of fairness. They expect all parties to obey the law in spirit as well as letter. When there is a way to get around the election laws and rules, when one party gains an unfair advantage by colluding with an outside force, we have a situation that is fundamentally unfair.

We have a situation today where the spirit of the election spending limits is being flagrantly flouted. Bill 195 represents a real and meaningful opportunity to change that. It’s an opportunity to ensure that the law is upheld, loopholes are closed and elections are fair, just as the people of Ontario would expect from all of us. That’s why I would strongly encourage all members of the Legislature to support this bill this afternoon.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I want to say that I will be supporting the member from Wellington–Halton Hills, because we, as New Democrats, are as worried about collusion as anyone else.

But I’ve got some concerns, and I’m getting awfully worried about you guys. You guys are so fixated on this Working Families Coalition that I think it has had a debilitating psychological effect on all of you. It’s all you think about, each and every day. That’s why I’m concerned. I’m just stating a concern; I could be wrong.

Perhaps you don't dream about this; you don't go to bed thinking, "How am I going to get to that Working Families Coalition?" Maybe you don't. It appears as if you do, because so often you guys make reference to Pat Dillon. I'm surprised you didn't mention Pat Dillon today.

Mr. Ted Arnott: I did.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: He's not just after us.

Mr. Frank Klees: Thanks for raising it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): You might want to speak through the Chair.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: But I was about to say that we are not necessarily the recipients of largesse from that group either; you're quite right. Indeed, we're not generous recipients from people like the taxpayers' federation, an organization that is not very friendly to the NDP. You probably would agree with that, yes?

Mr. Frank Klees: They've never attacked you.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: The taxpayer federation is, dare I say, a very conservative organization. Dare I say they are closely affiliated mostly with you guys, but they relate to the Liberals as well, especially with the corporate tax cuts and all. Some people call them a right-wing lobby—I hate the words "right-wing lobby." Do they collude with Tories against the rest of them? Would I use the word "collusion" in that regard? You understand what I'm getting at.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I think I know where you're going.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: And you know the citizens' coalition too, right? Some people say they are a right-wing lobby group. Are they Conservative? God knows, yes; oh yes, they are. And boy, are they affiliated to you guys mostly. Do they collude with you?

Mr. Ted McMeekin: Oh, no.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I don't know. I don't think so. Do they connect with you? Absolutely—ideologically, philosophically—yes, they do.

But if you were to extend the same logic to the Working Families Coalition, one wonders whether or not there are similarities between that group and the taxpayers' federation and the citizens' coalition. You'll dismiss it, of course. You'll say there are no similarities. But, gee, I think there are.

I don't know that there is collusion, necessarily. They favour some over others, to be sure. I remind folks that the Working Families Coalition is not known to endorse a whole lot of New Democrats either, but they set themselves up to defend certain things, rightly or wrongly, as the taxpayers' federation does, as the citizens' coalition does.

Indeed, even the banks advertise from time to time for their own interests. Do they collude with Tories? I don't know. Are they affiliated? Yes. Are the banks close to Tories? I think so. Oh, God, are they ever affiliated and close. But they're often just as close to the Liberals, God knows, with the corporate tax cuts and all. They are such beneficiaries of the largesse of Liberal governments.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Tell them about insurance companies, Rosie.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Insurance companies similarly have a lot of good friends in the Conservative Party; indeed, they have a lot of good friends in the Liberal Party. Do they collude? I don't know.

Mr. Mike Colle: They concoct.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: They concoct, indeed, to collude from time to time.

Interjection.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I just wanted to be fair if I could. I'm trying to be fair. Am I being fair? I think I am.

There are other groups. Who else? Pharmaceutical companies, yeah. The CFIB, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. They're not close to New Democrats that I'm aware of. Let me know if you think I'm wrong.

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Interjection.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: But they advertise for their own interest, and they reach out as much as they can to whomever supports them.

Interjection.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Yes, often they've got a stranglehold on some parties more than others.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Who supports us?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Yes, I often wonder who supports the NDP. If anybody should be introducing such a motion today it should be the NDP. It's the NDP that should be introducing a motion that there shall be no collusion between the very wealthy in this country and two major political parties that are their spokesmen and spokeswomen. But I don't want to be too harsh about those things, really. I might just want to be fair.

Look, New Democrats don't like any collusion because collusion usually is between big players. That's the way I think about it in my little mind. When little people collude, it's like, what are they colluding for? How to be poorer than they are, if you know what I mean? When rich people collude, it's about being richer, getting wealthy, right? That's collusion in my mind. When oil companies get together, that's collusion. When they have similar prices at the gas stations I call that collusion. They claim there is no such collusion. When the prices are the same throughout, it appears to me that there's collusion afoot. The insurance companies, by and large, are the same; the banks, by and large, are the same. These are the big fat cats that dominate the economic field and that play us like marionettes. They play you guys but you just don't realize it. They play the Tories—no, they don't play them because they're part of it; they're affiliated, like Mike Harris, who belongs to a number of big corporations like Magna. God bless. I read that he was earning \$780,000 bucks for being a board member. Am I mistaken? Is it \$780,000. God bless, I say. Michael, what are you and I going to get when we retire out of this place?

Mr. Mike Colle: Peanuts.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: We don't even have a pension.

Mike Harris left with \$820,000 with his buyout. What do the Conservative members get since 1995? About \$4,000 or \$5,000 for RRSPs and the wonderful contribution plan that we got. Mike Harris got rid of that golden pension that we used to have. Remember the salaries we used to make? We used to make, I think, \$44,000 when we got here, Ted, you and I. Some \$44,000 plus one third tax free; that would have made it—what?—\$63,000, \$65,000 or something? Man, that was a big salary we were earning in those days. Mike Harris wanted to get rid of that golden pension that we had. Do you remember that golden pension that we would have had, Ted, you and I? My God, we would have been millionaires. He cuts the strings to that wonderful golden pension and he lives as a millionaire and leaves these poor schleps here with nothing.

I was getting carried away; sorry. I was forgetting myself. But now we're talking about collusion between big players who influence their own company's efforts to make a little more. That, to me, is collusion. I know that there are a whole lot of groups—by the way, some unions support us, and some of you Tories will call that collusion. I understand that. Would that union members and union support supported us, because we would be forming government each and every time. I don't call that collusion.

I want to leave some time for my—

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: It's okay.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Are we okay here?

If there was indeed collusion between unions and New Democrats, we would be forming government.

Interjection.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Member from Nepean, we wait for your comic relief to come very shortly. As you bellow your strength in this House, as your voice rebounds from one wall to the other each and every day, God bless—is there collusion between you and the banks? I don't know. You and the insurance companies? I don't know. You and the citizens coalition taxpayers federation? I don't know. Unions and New Democrats? I don't know. So I say I support this bill here today because I think it would do us all a favour. It would do us all a favour for New Democrats, Liberals and Tories to stand up and say we're against any kind of collusion—

Mr. Mike Colle: All collusion.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: —all collusion connected to any political party once and for all, even when we suspect collusion between Conservatives and other groups. So I stand with you today, member from Wellington—Halton Hills, to oppose collusion of any kind.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mr. David Zimmer: I'm going to share my time with the member from Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock.

I've studied this bill, and, in my opinion, it's just a fuzzy piece of legislation, brought in a political year as we're approaching a political and obvious election. I say at best it's confusing, or mischievous and redundant. Let

me tell you why I think it's confusing, mischievous and redundant. I essentially want to make three points.

First of all, when you read through the existing legislation that's on the books, the Election Finances Act already distinguishes between advertising expenses incurred by third parties and advertising expenses incurred by political parties, constituency associations, candidates and others acting on their behalf. That distinction is already on the books. It's crystal clear.

When you read the existing act, it goes on and points out that if third party advertising is not at arm's-length, then it is already included under candidate reporting or spending limits. So there is already a mechanism to deal with the situation that this private member's bill is supposedly designed to get after.

Now, if it is at arm's-length, then it's third party advertising and it would not be included. That's one problem with the bill: The mischief is already dealt with in the existing legislation. So that's an either/or situation that's already captured.

My second point is that the bill is flawed. Here's where it gets really fuzzy: When you read through the bill, it talks about collusion and it talks about express or implied knowledge. There's no definition section in the bill, so nobody knows exactly what one means or what the bill is intended to capture by the word "collusion"; neither does it define what the bill is supposed to mean by "express or implied knowledge" of third party advertising expenses.

If the bill were to pass, we're going to get into a really swampy area where a whole lot of people are going to try to figure out just what is meant by collusion, what constitutes collusion, what constitutes express knowledge or implied knowledge—and "implied knowledge" is another one of those fuzzy things, like "collusion." The bill, as drafted, is going to be impossible to interpret, and if you can't interpret it, it's going to be impossible to enforce. That's why the bill is technically flawed. So you take that flaw and you match it with what's already on the books—that if there's third party advertising, it's already captured and it has got to be reported.

My third point is that the McGuinty government took steps back in 2007 with Bill 218, which was the Election Statute Law Amendment Act. What that bill said—and it's crystal clear in that bill, unlike this sort of fuzzy, mischievous, redundant piece of legislation—was that third parties that spend \$500 or more in an election period have got to register with the Chief Electoral Officer. So you've got to register them. Then, within six months of the election, that registered third party has got to report to the Chief Electoral Officer on their spending activities.

If they've spent more than \$5,000, it takes it a step further and really ratchets down on the oversight, because it says that if you spend more than \$5,000, the expenses actually have to be audited and signed off by a professional auditor. A statement of authorization is also required on behalf of third party advertising. So all of those mechanisms, to deal with what this member, in his slightly paranoid political mind, sees as collusion and

implied hanky-panky going on behind the scenes, are already dealt with.

1450

Furthermore, just the other day the Attorney General of Ontario, Mr. Bentley, introduced an act, the Ensuring Integrity in Ontario Elections Act, 2011, which deals with corrupt practices. There are all kinds of protections built into the act, and if the Attorney General's bill goes through, they'll be strengthened even more.

The legislation is being fuzzy and redundant and mischievous and all of that sort of stuff. One has to ask oneself: Why is the legislation being brought forward? The legislation is being brought forward on the fifth day before we adjourn before the October 2011 election, and it's just sort of out there to muddy up the waters and score some political points. It's all unnecessary, because the legislation is already on the books. It's going to be strengthened by the Attorney General's legislation. This is just a little political posturing during private members' business. For this reason, I will not be supporting this bill, and I urge my fellow members of the Legislature to see through the fuzziness and the redundancy and mischievousness of this legislation and vote against it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mr. Steve Clark: I'm pleased to put a few comments on the record in response to Bill 195, as presented by my colleague the member for Wellington-Halton Hills. I want to commend him for bringing the bill forward. It's a bill that I believe is needed in this province. We need to strengthen Ontario's election advertising laws. As our Ontario PC critic for democratic reform, I think that the centre of any true democracy is where everyone plays by the same rules, and I think that's really the heart of this bill.

The member from Willowdale uses the word "mischievous." I would use the word "necessary," because I truly believe that this is necessary: We need to strengthen these advertising laws and we need to make sure that everyone plays by the same rules.

If you want to talk about being mischievous: When Dalton McGuinty and his Attorney General talk in benign terms and then send their henchmen out to call our Prime Minister, Stephen Harper, corrupt, because the Attorney General and the Premier—Dalton McGuinty at one point says that he's just like Prime Minister Harper, and then the next minute there's a Liberal email going out insinuating that federal Conservatives are corrupt. So if you want to talk about being mischievous, if you want to talk about muddying the water, you can't have a bill that talks, as the member from Willowdale talks, about integrity.

The bill from the member for Wellington-Halton Hills puts some integrity back into our election advertising, because it's a little rich for the Liberal Party opposite to talk about adding integrity and cracking down on election fraud when they continue to skirt the election advertising laws. What we're proposing here are amendments, through this bill, that need to be done. The member

talked about Working Families, and let's make no mistake as to where that advertising is directed. It is directed at our party.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: That's why you don't like it.

Mr. Steve Clark: We're going to talk about that, member for Northumberland. We're going to talk about that.

I had the pleasure of running in a by-election. The beauty of by-elections is that you don't have the play-book. You don't have the red book and the orange book and the blue book; you talk about issues and you talk about people. I'm proud, as is the member for Wellington-Halton Hills, that I had a wide variety of people support me in my election. I had teachers working on my campaign, nurses—people, as the member so aptly puts it, whose head bosses at the union use some of their money for the Working Families Coalition.

I think it's very important, when these ads are running—actually with our leader, Tim Hudak, in some of them—some people were shocked and appalled when they realized what the Working Families were trying to do.

Everyone needs to have limits. We have limits. All candidates, all of our competitors, in the October 6 election will have limits. What we're talking about is strengthening the playing field so that groups like Working Families have to play by those same rules, so that there is no collusion, there are no mischievous emails coming out—as there were this week just after the Attorney General tabled his election bill—maligning the federal Conservative Party.

You should be ashamed of yourselves for being part of that smear campaign. You should stand in your place today and support Mr. Arnott and his wonderful bill. We need to stand up for integrity—all the members. I appreciate the New Democratic Party stating their support for Bill 195.

If there's time to pass the Attorney General's bill before we adjourn, there's time to pass this bill as well.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: I have only a minute to speak, but I just wanted to say that I support the member from Wellington-Halton Hills. I support his initiative. It's absolutely necessary to tighten up the rules. We do not support collusion. We're not the beneficiaries of it in the New Democratic Party.

It is very interesting, following the federal election. I say to folk who are part of Working Families or any other group that pretends to be an amalgam of folk and pretends to be non-partisan but, in fact, is very partisan: It just doesn't work. We looked at strategic voting in the federal election; it doesn't work. If your aim is to attack Progressive Conservatives, for example, guess what? In the last election, it did not work.

Look at voting for someone, for heaven's sake. If there's one message I get out in the last 40 seconds it's this: We shouldn't be voting against anybody. We should be voting for someone—for party platforms, for perform-

ance, for the person or for the party—not against someone. Any group or any person who advocates that kind of manipulation of the system, whether on a gross scale or simply at the ballot box, really doesn't understand the very terms of democracy: that what we're supposed to be about here is putting forward something positive and voting for something positive.

New Democrats are absolutely opposed to union or corporate donations. We always have been and always will be. I support the bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mr. Rick Johnson: It's a pleasure to stand up and speak to this bill this afternoon. We all know the purposes of why this is being brought forward. My colleague from Willowdale was pretty clear about this. It's because of the antics that occurred during the last federal election, and we step forward as a government to bring forward legislation to ban dirty tricks during elections.

The right to vote, we all agree, is a fundamental human right, and it's something that our forefathers all fought for to make sure that we have this maintained in this province. When things are going along, we know the reasons why this occurred. There were phone calls that were being made. This has been happening across Canada. We brought forward legislation to tighten up those loopholes, because it was a loophole. Elections Canada has it; we didn't have it in Ontario. We want to make sure that things like phone calls in the middle of the night, saying that you're working for one candidate when you're actually not, disrupting people's lives by telling them to go to other voting booths or voting poll stations—these are things that need to be dealt with. That's why we brought forward the motion that we did as a government. I think it is something that is absolutely needed and absolutely required.

Let's talk about the Working Families Coalition. This is a concerned group of people who remember the years 1995-2003. They remember the problems that were had. They remember the underfunding of education that was so predominant. I was on the school board back then when the reports were brought forward that proved that schools were being underfunded by over \$1 billion. I remember the famous statement by the former Minister of Education from that time, who said, "Let's create a crisis in education." So we've been there. The fact that there's a group that has gotten together to speak about this, raise that issue and remind people—I think they're just looking after their own interests.

1500

If we want to talk about organizations working against people, what about the pharmacy campaign last year, coincidentally launched in 22 campaigns? Who ran that campaign? Do you remember the name of that person?

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Independent pharmacists.

Mr. Rick Johnson: Yeah, independent pharmacists. Right. I think his name was Mark Spiro who ran that campaign.

Interjection: Oh, yeah. What does he do now?

Mr. Rick Johnson: He's now running, of course, the PC campaign.

Interjection: No collusion there.

Mr. Rick Johnson: No, there's no collusion. No, we wouldn't call it that.

I recall the advertising going on. There was advertising that was run on the radio stations across the province, including in my area. One of the ads said that the Liberal government was cutting \$1 billion out of front-line health care, which is not true, because in our budget it showed that we are clearly increasing funding for health care by over \$2.5 billion. So we launched a complaint with the advertising council of Canada, and we got a response three days later from the advertising council of Canada. What they said was, "This is a political advertisement. It doesn't have to be truthful." To me, that is something we should be talking about, but that was the actual ruling we got back from the advertising council of Canada: "A political campaign does not have to be truthful."

We're seeing the results of this when the party opposite is talking about: "We can lower the electricity rates. We can do this without impacting you."

Interjection.

Mr. Rick Johnson: The cuts are coming. That's the behind the scenes stuff.

"Collusion"—I looked it up. It says that it's "a secret agreement between two or more parties for fraudulent, illegal or deceitful purposes." The fact that a group of workers, working groups, wants to work together to tell the truth and bring things out about what they believe parties are talking about, I think there's nothing wrong with that. I think they should be working together.

When I was on school boards, we worked to lobby and raise awareness about the underfunding that the previous Conservative Party was doing to education. We fought for that, and we were successful in turning that around. It took an election to do it, but we were successful in getting it turned around.

We've taken great steps to look at the election statute ourselves under Bill 218, the Election Statute Law Amendment Act. I believe that when we're working forward on these, we will get this cleared up so that fraud cannot occur. We're tightening up some loopholes.

I commend my colleague from Willowdale—how many times did he use the word "fuzziness"? Many times he used it. But we all know what this motion is about, coming forward at this point in time. It's a chance to try to raise awareness; it's political posturing, and nothing more than that.

What we're doing is, we will be clearing up the problems, through our Bill 218, so that they don't occur this fall. You know what? That's going to be good for all parties, because nobody's an angel in all of this, I'm sure, and by tightening up the laws, we will be able to cut down on the fraud that is taking place, misleading people, taking advantage of people, trying to deflect people from it, and I think it's very important that we do this.

It's not clear to me what this bill is trying to achieve. The Election Finances Act already distinguishes between advertising expenses incurred by third parties, advertising expenses incurred by political parties and constituency associations. This was brought forward a number of years ago to Elections Ontario; it was ruled on and it's been dealt with.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I appreciate the opportunity to address this very important piece of legislation that is more than just housekeeping; it is a very important clarification that is required in our election laws in Ontario. I feel very confident that, once Tim Hudak forms government, the Ontario PC caucus will ensure that this bill becomes law if this Liberal government doesn't.

I applaud my colleague Mr. Arnott from Wellington-Halton Hills. As he's mentioned to you, his wife is a teacher who has been forced through her union to campaign against him.

I do feel badly for the members of the government, who have been given some talking points without understanding this issue from the get-go. I need to explain to them where the loopholes have come from and why this is a necessary piece of legislation.

I'm going to read some quotes from an original appeal to Elections Ontario from the Ontario PC Party. According to the Elections Ontario report, which was prepared by the law firm Torys LLP, Dalton McGuinty's former chief of staff, Don Guy, the Liberal campaign director in 2003, 2007 and now in 2011, was among the senior party members to meet with Working Families. Let me quote: "While we have concluded that the Working Families Coalition was 'independent' of the OLP within the parameters of control and agency ... the WFC's use of consultants with known Liberal connections who were simultaneously providing services both to the WFC and the OLP and, where the very person running the OLP campaign, Don Guy, is president of the polling research firm hired by the WFC"—get this—"certainly constitutes, in our view, grounds for concern which warranted this investigation."

Further, I add from Greg Essensa, the Chief Electoral Officer, in 2009: "The fourth public policy area for consideration is, should Ontario adopt stricter registration and anti-collusion provisions? Under the Election Finances Act, there is no specific provision that prohibits a third party from co-operating or coordinating its advertising with either a political party or one of its candidates, provided that the party/candidate is not actually controlling the third party's" agencies.

Furthermore, in the Torys report commissioned by Elections Ontario: "The third party advertising regime is new to Ontario. The first election under the regime disclosed a number of rough edges, particularly in circumstances where there is potential for conflicts of interest/collusion between registered parties and third parties."

That's why this piece of legislation is here, and I can tell you that if it is not passed before this election, it will

be passed before the next election. In fact, I've raised this issue many a time in the Legislature as well as with the public.

I go to an ad campaign that the Working Families Coalition ran during the Oscars, and I quote Christina Blizzard:

"You don't buy a spot during the Oscars with chopped liver. This is a well-heeled, well-organized group...."

"In 2003, Liberal backroom operative Marcel Wieder was behind the Working Families' nasty negative ad that attacked then-Premier Ernie Eves, proclaiming, 'Not this time, Ernie.'"

She goes on to say:

"There are very few rules about third party advertising.

"Third party election advertising is not subject to spending limits.

"Third parties are not required to register with Elections Ontario if they advertise outside the writ period.

"If our election finance laws have loopholes ... isn't it time to take a second look?"

Our election laws have loopholes. My colleague from Wellington-Halton Hills has decided that the time is now, before the next election, to fix those loopholes. I might add that every single one of the complaints my colleagues opposite have made about this piece of legislation could be made about the same legislation they brought forward earlier this week. In fact, if they really want to make positive change in Ontario, what they could do, instead of making spurious allegations against the Prime Minister of Canada, the Conservative Party of Canada, the Ontario PC Party and our leader, Tim Hudak, is actually add this bill to their bill and we would have no trouble supporting that.

They should also know that case law has interpreted collusion, direct and indirect. We live in a British parliamentary democracy and tradition. They should know that, on the other side. This bill could go to committee at the same time.

But it doesn't stop the fact that many of the principals of the Working Families Coalition are the exact same people who are behind Dalton McGuinty's Liberal Party. For example, Don Guy, as I mentioned earlier, is the president of Pollara. He does polling for the Working Families Coalition; at the same time, he is the director of Mr. McGuinty's campaign. In addition, Marcel Wieder, who does advertising for the Ontario Liberal Party and has contracts with the Ontario Liberal Party, is also the person responsible for doing ads for the Working Families Coalition. Then, of course, there's Pat Dillon, the head of the Working Families Coalition, who has multiple appointments by this government, who also had face time with the former Minister of Finance who is also the campaign chair for the Ontario Liberal Party, Mr. Sorbara.

We know through emails that there have been shared ads, scripts and polling details between the two organizations, and we think that it's time this loophole is closed. This is a legal issue, it is an election issue, it is a

public policy issue and it is a transparency issue, one where we need to bring back integrity to this situation.
1510

Again, I believe, in the work that we have done in this House and the amount of times I've challenged the Premier to tell us directly that he does not have anything to do with the Working Families, that he cannot deny it; he will not deny it, because it is true. We know that there is collusion between these two parties, the Ontario Liberal Party as well as the Working Families Coalition. That's why we fought them in court.

There is a loophole; it needs to be changed. That's why my colleague from Wellington-Halton Hills is trying to do something that will restore integrity back into third party advertising laws in this province.

Again, I am disappointed that the Ontario Liberal caucus is sitting here with speaking points and they do not know what they're talking about. I can tell you something: Once we pass this law, you will understand why it is being done—but you don't.

You are benefiting big time from the \$10-million attack-ad campaign that's about to hit the Ontario Progressive Conservatives. I wish for one moment that they could actually sit in here as legislators and not as Liberals and do what is for the public interest, what is for the public good, and close that loophole that so many members of the media have called on.

Ladies and gentlemen, I appreciate the opportunity. I support my colleague. The Liberals can put their money where their mouth is and if they want transparency in politics, to do it this way.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): The honourable member from Wellington-Halton Hills has two minutes for his response.

Mr. Ted Arnott: I appreciate the members from my caucus who have supported this and who have spoken eloquently about it. I also want to express my appreciation to the New Democrats who have spoken in favour of this bill.

I will address the member for Willowdale, who criticized the bill in his brief remarks. He said the bill was "fuzzy," "mischievous" and "redundant," and he said it was "impossible to interpret."

Obviously, the member for Willowdale didn't hear the remarks of the chief election officer—which were in Hansard—before our legislative committee in May 2009. Since he didn't hear that, I will repeat those comments again. This is Mr. Essensa, who is the chief elections officer of Ontario: "There is no specific provision that prohibits a third party from co-operating or coordinating its advertising with either a political party or one of its candidates, provided that the party/candidate is not actually controlling the third party's advertising."

Mr. Essensa also reminded the committee that there are already more stringent requirements in place federally, in BC, in New Brunswick and in Quebec, and there are also regulations being proposed in Alberta that are similar to this Bill 195.

So when he says that this bill is redundant, he is incorrect. When he says that it's fuzzy, I would challenge

the member to support this bill, allow it to go to committee so that we can go into the details—perhaps have public hearings and invite some of the groups forward if they wish to make a presentation—and deal with amendments that will deal with that concern that he appears to have. When he suggests it's mischievous, I'm not sure really what to say to that, other than the fact that we have an election coming, and I'm pleased to have this opportunity to have a private member's ballot opportunity just before the election. This is, to me, a very important issue and a very serious issue.

It's interesting that, quite frankly, the bill was introduced on Monday of this week. The very next day, the Liberals introduced their Bill 196. They talk about trying to muddy the waters. That's exactly what they were trying to do.

I would say again that we are not opposed in principle to their Bill 196, but we believe that it should be amended to include the provisions of my Bill 195, to make it fair for all political parties in this next election and in the years ahead.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): The time for this ballot item has expired. We'll vote on Mr. Arnott's bill in about 50 minutes.

BRITISH HOME CHILD DAY ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 SUR LE JOUR DES PETITS IMMIGRÉS BRITANNIQUES

Mr. Brownell moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 185, An Act to proclaim British Home Child Day / Projet de loi 185, Loi proclamant le Jour des petits immigrants britanniques.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Pursuant to standing order 98, the honourable member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

Mr. Jim Brownell: It is my pleasure to rise in the House today to speak on Bill 185, an act to proclaim September 28 in each year as British Home Child Day.

I speak on this bill with the support of co-sponsors, the member from Parkdale-High Park, MPP Cheri DiNovo, and the member from Leeds-Grenville, my colleague right across the border, MPP Steve Clark.

I wish to share with my colleagues here in the House today a story that few Canadians know anything about, a story about courage, strength and perseverance. It is a story of Canada's British home children. Daughters, sons, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of home children have joined us in the Legislature today, and they are here to remember their ancestors and to share their stories.

At this time I would like to welcome four siblings who are here today. Lynda Burke, Beth Bruder, Janet Regan and their brother, Fred Wardle, along with Fred's wife, Susan, are here today in memory of their mother, Catherine McCallum, sent from Quarrier's Village, Bridge of Weir, Scotland, in 1927.

Olivia Willar, here with her daughter, Dorothy, are remembering a mother and grandmother, Ivy Rose Elizabeth Warren.

Iris Reilly, here with her two daughters, Heather and Cheryl, are remembering Iris's father, James Forbes.

Mike Dean, from my riding of Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry, is here with his wife, Nancy—Nancy taught with me—remembering Mike's grandmother, Margarite Housley, a home child from Liverpool.

Also from my riding we welcome Carol Goddard, sitting way up in the corner, the granddaughter of Charles Frederick William Patrick Conroy, who came to Canada in 1905 aboard the Bavarian at the age of 16 years.

Al Lewis joins us today with his wife, Grace, as Al's father, Edward Lewis, arrived in Canada in 1901 at age 11, stepping off a ship named the Parisian.

Sharon Munro is here as the great-granddaughter of Marion Kelly of Scotland.

Lorraine Reoch, whose husband's grandfather, Robert Wilson Reoch, an orphan at Quarrier's Village and sent to Canada in 1886 along with his brother, John, is here in the gallery, as are Barbara Summers, Marie Sears and Marilyn Wilson, here today to remember their grandfather, Jesse Walker, and his sister, Emily Walker, who were sent to Canada by the Barnardo organization in 1905.

Gordon Fudge and his sister, Jeanette Alexander, join us. They remember their mother, Gladys Fudge, sent to Canada from England at the age of 12.

Between 1869 and 1939, about 100,000 children were sent to Canada from Great Britain, many of them to work as farm labourers and domestics in homes in Ontario and across Canada. These were the British home children, boys and girls anywhere from six months to 18 years of age. They were part of the child immigration movement. Most of them came from orphanages or other institutions, such as the Maryhill Industrial School in Glasgow, Scotland, an institution well known to my grandmother, Mary Scott Pearson.

For a variety of reasons, the children were sent to Canada and particularly Ontario, as we were a growing economy and in need of labourers. Officials believed that these children would be better off in a new land with fresh air and wide-open spaces. Most of the children were transported by British religious and charitable organizations. For the most part, these organizations believed that they were doing a good and noble thing for the children, who were worse off living in poverty in Great Britain.

In reflecting on the home children of Ontario, we think about the work of Dr. Thomas John Barnardo, the energetic founder of the Barnardo's homes that placed 30,000 children in Ontario. Hazelbrae in Peterborough was Dr. Barnardo's receiving home for girls. We think of the indomitable Maria Rye, who brought the first group of British children to Canada in 1869 and housed them in a refurbished jail near Niagara-on-the-Lake. We remember Annie Macpherson's home, originally opened in Galt in 1871 and then moved to Stratford in 1883.

Sending some 200 children to Canada each year, she came to Canada every summer to visit her children personally.

James Fegan was the founder of Mr. Fegan's Home for Boys in North Buckinghamshire, England, and in other communities throughout England. He had a distributing centre at 295 George Street here in Toronto.

To my family—and I welcome here today my sisters Mary Lafave and Judy Neville and my brother Tom. My wife, Paulette, is up here, and so is my sister-in-law, Vale, remembering John today.

We remember William Quarrier, who is remembered as the founder of the orphan homes of Scotland, having sent over 7,000 Scottish children to Canada from Quarrier's Village at Bridge of Weir between 1871 and 1938. It was from Fairknowe home, Quarrier's receiving house in Brockville—my good friend Steve Clark, MPP from Leeds-Grenville, certainly knows that place—that our grandmother, Mary Scott Pearson, and our great-aunt, Margaret Scott Pearson, were sent out from the home as domestics in Ontario.

This afternoon, I am pleased to welcome to the Legislature Keith and June McKey. They're back here for the third time. They're here along with their grandson Andrew Welch. It was June's mother, Christina Myles, who arrived in Canada as a home child in 1914, with her uncle James Myles arriving in 1915. I remember the last time I had the private member's bill, I had their two Bibles sitting right here on my desk. I know that they're up there with June today. They were sent from Quarrier's home in Scotland to the same receiving home in Brockville that I alluded to earlier.

1520

As for my grandmother, she was just 42 days shy of her 14th birthday when she arrived as an orphan at Halifax, Nova Scotia, aboard the S.S. Hibernian on September 28, 1891. After spending some time in cottage 10 in Quarrier's Village, her sister, Maggie, departed from Greenock, Scotland, aboard the S.S. Pomeranian in 1894. Fortunately for these two young orphans, they were to be reunited in eastern Ontario before Maggie departed with her husband to Manitoba to homestead there.

In the gallery today is Patricia Sinclair, whose great-grandfather Henry Pouncett came to Canada on April 2, 1889, under the auspices of the Marchmont Home, the MacPherson's receiving and distribution home, in Belleville, Ontario.

The story of the British home children is one of challenge, determination and perseverance. Many home children faced adversity. Most were able to overcome it, but it was by no means easy. The British home children faced considerable challenges, and some experienced tremendous hardship. They were susceptible to mistreatment because their conditions were not closely monitored. Arriving in Ontario with their worldly possessions tucked in little wooden trunks, siblings were often separated upon their arrival, with many never to see each other again. This is an important part of story that deserves to be told.

Pat Hollins, who is here today, said in an email to me that: "under the care of Crusade of Rescue, my father, Ernest Charles Turner, and his two brothers came to Canada on June 24, 1921. Their father died in World War I, and no one is sure if the boys lived at the same residence or if they had been separated once they arrived at St. George Home in Ottawa."

Their story does not end there. Due to their remarkable courage, strength and perseverance, Canada's British home children did endure, and most of them went on to lead healthy and productive lives and contributed measurably to the development of Ontario.

While the British home children were underprivileged and suffered from unfortunate circumstances, they endured and almost all of them who came to Canada remained in Canada and indeed in Ontario. They grew up to raise families of their own. They contributed to our country's economic growth and prosperity. They helped to cultivate our country's values and defend our country's freedom. More than 10,000 of them fought for Canada in the First and Second World Wars.

In a message to me from Ivy Succie, who is here in the gallery, I quote: "My father was a Barnardo boy who came to Canada in 1898. He suffered at first but was then placed with a lovely family that treated him as their own." Ivy is the founder and president of the Hazelbrae Barnardo Home Memorial Group in Peterborough and has done great things to bring the home child story to her community. I understand that if this bill passes, they will be unveiling a memorial to the home children on September 28 of this year.

As well, I welcome Sandra Joyce. Her dad, Robert Joyce, came over to Canada from Quarrier's home in 1925. He was 15 and his brother 12. Robert worked on farms in the Brockville and Smiths Falls areas, but at the age of 20 he made his way to Toronto, where he enlisted in the Canadian army and was stationed in both North Africa and Italy in World War II. Those are the contributions that the home children made to our country's freedom and its development.

Canada's British home children are part of our country's history. They are part of our heritage. They represent a part of our past, and their descendants represent a part of our future. Their stories are ones that need to be taught in our schools.

I certainly am delighted to welcome Taylor and Cheryl Kennedy to this House today. Cheryl's great-grandfather Frederick McNally was a home child who arrived in Belleville on April 11, 1892. According to the family folklore, he ran away from there to Toronto, where he worked and paid his way through school to become a government veterinarian surgeon.

Today, it is estimated that 12% of Canada's population is made up of British home children and their descendants. That represents more than four million Canadians, and the number continues to grow. Yet there are many Canadians who still do not know the story of the home children. They are not aware of the hardships that they suffered and the sacrifices that were made. They

are not aware of the tremendous contributions that British home children made to the social and economic fibre of our great province.

Dave Penfold is here today with his parents, Mike and Helen, as Mike's father, Frank Penfold, was a British home child. Frank sailed from Liverpool, England in 1908 on the S.S. Dominion, along with 173 other home children, to arrive in Montreal, Quebec. Frank spent his early years in Belleville, Ontario, and later served in World War I with the British Royal Navy for five years. In World War II he served in the United Kingdom for four years with the Canadian army. He later married Mary Maxwell MacDonald Anderson and worked as a letter carrier.

Last year, Canada Post issued a stamp commemorating home children. As well, the federal government proclaimed 2010 as the Year of the British Home Child. I had a chance to go to Scotland, and travelled through Scotland and learned much about my family. But today we have here in the Legislature David and Catherine Lorente. They had an opportunity to travel abroad in honour of home children. Dave and Kay, who are co-founders of Home Children Canada, were invited by the British House of Commons to go to London in 1998 to address their all-party committee looking into the welfare of former child migrants. David's father, Joseph Arthur Lorente, was a home child who arrived in Canada in 1914 at the age of 15.

In closing, I think it is time that we honour the home children of Ontario. It is time that we set aside a day, the day that my grandmother stepped on Canadian soil—September 28; selfishly I do that—but it's a day on which we can all be proud to recognize and appreciate and say thank you to the home children who did so much for Ontario and Canada.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mr. Steve Clark: I'm pleased to rise in the House today to speak about Bill 185, which would proclaim September 28 of each year as British Home Child Day in our province. I'm also very proud to be speaking as a co-sponsor with the member for Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry and the member for Parkdale-High Park. I think it's high time that we have this debate and pass this bill. I know that the member opposite, my eastern Ontario neighbour, has brought this before under a couple of different incarnations, and I'm glad that we've been able to get past the politics of this place and actually have this, if the vote goes through for it to be passed. I want to welcome all of the guests in the Legislature today. It's a very important bill, and I want to again congratulate the two members.

When this place works, when all three parties can get together—we all know the tone of this place and how, in a very few short days, we'll be leaving this place for the summer, and we all have our own idea of how best we can run the province, but it's nice for us to come together today. Again, I congratulate all the members.

The previous incarnation of this speech was Bill 12, which I guess was the first time I had the opportunity to

discuss it as a member of this Legislature. I'm going to get into the Brockville connection as part of my riding of Leeds—Grenville, but I also want to talk about the personal connection to British home children that up until Bill 12 was introduced I didn't even know myself.

As some of you will remember from that debate, my wife, Deanna—her paternal grandfather, Sidney Roberts, was a British home child. He came to Canada as a seven-year-old with his brother John, who was nine. They were involved with a trip on the Dominion steamship line that departed Liverpool in July 1908, bound for Montreal. Sidney then was shifted from Quebec to Ontario, and he landed in Woodstock, where he lived with a farm family, but he was never, ever adopted.

Sidney's mother died in childbirth. He was one of 11 children, and the family was separated. Some of the children remained in England, some went to Canada, some to the United States and others to Australia. I know that if my late father-in-law David Roberts was alive, he'd be extremely pleased, not just that I was here in this place but that I got to talk about Sidney Roberts being a British home child.

I appreciate that the member for Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry talked about his grandmother and his great-aunt and the Brockville home where they were sent from as domestics.

1530

At the last discussion on this bill in this House, I thanked, and I will thank again today, Doug Grant, who is a historian from Brockville who has done much research on the Fairknowe Home, which was the home in Brockville—which still stands to this day, although, as I have mentioned in this place before, it's now an apartment building. I believe it was back in the 1930s that it was subdivided for homes. The home still stands, but there is no reference, there are no defining marks, of what had happened there many years ago. So, again, it's an opportunity here today for us to remember the British home children.

I want to reiterate some of the remarks that Mr. Brownell talked about earlier where he talked about courage, strength and perseverance, and I echo those words in my address today. The home in Brockville, the Fairknowe Home, the Quarrier home for orphans in Brockville, was the organization, as the member noted, from William Quarrier from the Orphan Homes of Scotland, who purchased that large home in the east end of Brockville in 1888 from Amelie and Harry B. Abbott, the previous owners. Abbott had been a vice-president and managing director with the Brockville and Ottawa Railway. Earlier, from 1847 to 1871, it had been the home of, again, a very well known family in Brockville, Caroline and George Crawford.

The picture that I had at the time and still have in my office was taken in front of the home of a new group of boys and girls that had arrived. The picture actually had William Quarrier and his wife, Isabella, and I understand from historians that there were some kids in that photo who still are unidentified to this day. In later years, the

Fairknowe Home was operated by Claude Winters, who was its superintendent, and the facility closed in 1934—again, sold to Dorothy and Arthur Hardy.

It's interesting to note that some of the early work of the children's aid in Brockville was done at that particular facility, but now it's an apartment building, there are a number of single family homes around it, and again, but for the writings and some of the work of the home child group and the work of my colleague and neighbour Mr. Brownell, some of that would be forgotten.

I do also want to make mention of a lady, Donna King, who is known to the member, who also brought many items from a gentleman she introduced me to, the late Walter Wilson, who passed away in 1979. Donna showed me documents that she had from Mr. Wilson, a British home child. She had his original certificate of education from Dr. Barnardo's schools in London, and she also had the original trunk in which he had all of his possessions, something that would be familiar to some of the people in the audience today. The other artifact she had was a personal medallion for good conduct and length of service from Dr. Barnardo. So these were fascinating.

The other thing that was fascinating to me was the fact that he actually changed his name. He was named Walter Collett, but he changed his name to Walter Wilson, and she had a notification of a change of name, which was actually signed and took place on the field of battle on December 26, 1943, which was just totally new to me. It was an artifact that I was quite interested in, and I appreciated Donna's discussion about her desire, and she had clippings from the Toronto Star and later we had the clipping from the Toronto Sun from Christina Blizzard that talked about the need—that if this place would work, we should get together and pass this bill.

It's a bit of a coincidence that as we're debating this bill, another facility in my riding, in Athens, the Athens museum, is preparing to open an exhibit highlighting the incredible contribution of home children in that community. The exhibit will open on May 28 and will run for the entire year. I'd like to thank the Lorentes for providing the pin to me today, and I also have the crest that Mr. Brownell gave me, so I'll be asking, if they allow me to, to show that crest and some of the documents at that display in Athens for the year. I really hope that we'll be able to celebrate on September 28 at that exhibit and perhaps other areas in my riding—if all goes well today—that milestone in our communities.

There are a couple more stories I want to tell in the time that I have left. There were two girls that I was told about who were at the Fairknowe Home in Scotland around 1890. I share a surname with Maggie and Martha Clarke, although they spell their names with an E, not like mine. Maggie was just 13 and her sister, Martha, nine when they were orphaned and sent from their homeland across to the home in Brockville. Sadly, after arriving, Maggie and Martha were separated. Maggie went to a live with a home in Newboro, while Martha was adopted into a home in South Mountain.

Henry Smid of the Athens Historical Society noted there was a happy ending. Apparently, years after they were separated, Martha and Maggie, now married with children of their own, were reunited. I can only imagine how emotional it must have been for them to finally get connected after so many years apart.

Finally, the Athens Museum display, which runs, as I said, for a full year, reveals another legendary figure in that community's history: police chief Scotty McLean, who himself was a home child. Chief McLean came to Canada as a home child from Scotland in 1930 at the age of 16. After settling in Leeds county in 1935, he would go on to proudly serve his new country in Second World War as a member of the Governor General's Foot Guards. He obtained the rank of captain, and after he returned to the Athens area, he settled with his wife, Katherine.

Once again, Chief McLean would answer the call by taking a job as, first, a police officer. Then, after a 10-year break from the force, he came back to be the police chief in 1962. He'd hold the job until 1980. An obituary after his death in 1991 described his approach to policing in this way: "He enforced the law with firmness and impartiality, which made him sort of a father figure to many citizens." It really speaks to the character of Chief McLean that the man who grew up as an orphan would be described as a father figure, even to those who may have run afoul of the law.

Perhaps recalling the turmoil his own life at a young age and wanting to ensure that youth in his community had role models and guidance, McLean was a strong supporter of Scouts, Cubs, Girl Guides and Brownies. He was also an integral part of fundraising efforts for the Centre 76 Arena project, a rink where a new generation of kids would learn valuable lessons from life through sports. I have to tell you, as a young person who played minor hockey in that rink, when Chief Scotty McLean was there, there was no monkey business going on in the arena. You were always, as a young person, on your best behaviour. He was role model and a wonderful man and sadly missed.

I'm humbled to co-sponsor this bill, which is such a fitting tribute to the lasting legacy of British home children, to people like Maggie and Martha Clarke, to Chief McLean, to Sidney Roberts, to all of your relatives, all of the British home children's relatives and to the legacy that has come on. I'm pleased and proud that I have my name affixed to this bill, and I want to thank the member opposite for giving me that wonderful opportunity. I'll always remember it, my friend, and thank you for your generosity.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate?

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Before I begin, I just want to ask all members to join me in applauding those who've taken the time to come here and to support the member from Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry for all their work on this issue. Let's say thank you.

Applause.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: I also want to personally applaud the member for bringing this forward. It's not the first time; it's the third time. I also want to applaud him for his duties across the board in this place. He's one of those few members from across the aisle who has actually voted with us on occasional bills. He has gone beyond the partisan divisions of this place on a number of issues, and he has done it with integrity. It's, in part, sad that it has taken this long to see this bill come here, but better late than never. It's wonderful that we're going to pass it today. It's going to happen. I'm so pleased.

I'm going to give a little bit of a counterbalance to the words that you've heard so far because one of my favourite theologians and Christian apologists is C.S. Lewis. He had a great quote. He said, "Of all tyrannies, a tyranny sincerely exercised for the good of its victims may be the most oppressive."

1540

I think that the British home children was one of those instances where well-meaning people's good intentions led to some very disastrous consequences for little children. Can you imagine being four years old and being shipped off to a foreign country, to a farm, to strangers, to work as an indentured servant?

This is a part of our past as Canadians and Ontarians that I didn't know about until Mr. Brownell brought it to our attention, that I then researched and was appalled by.

My background is also half British. Luckily, in a sense, we came over with advantages—not coming over as children who worked on farms.

To set the backdrop to this, which is often much worse, you look at that period in England when children worked as virtual slaves. One of Annie Macpherson's motivators was to get children out of matchbox factories, where they were working as slaves, and to possibly send them off to something better: working as indentured servants. This was the backdrop for children in those days, and it went on for some 350 years.

What is most upsetting to me is that this went on up to the 1970s, when child migration was still okay. It took British author and social worker—among others, I'm sure—Margaret Humphreys, in 1987, shining a light on this, setting up the Child Migrants Trust and everything that we've benefited from since. She and others like her worked very hard to shine a light into this dark place.

Studies have shown that two thirds of the children who came as British home children were abused by their patrons—and this is why I applaud what the co-sponsors have said—and yet still went on to found a great province and found a great nation. As you heard, 12% of all Canadians are descended from these British home children. It's astounding that from that place, surely, of disfranchisement and darkness came children's incredible ingenuity, fortitude and integrity. It came from a very, very dark place.

An Ontario superintendent of neglected children, J.J. Kelso, was one of the few who stood up and tried to change the way these children were dealt with. The British home children didn't come under any jurisdiction,

in terms of ministerial responsibility, in Ontario, but in Nova Scotia they came under the Department of Natural Resources. That's how they were considered. They were considered natural resources. Most of them didn't go to church. Most of them didn't go to school. Most of them slept in barns.

Yes, we want to applaud, but we want to, first of all, recognize and honour the price paid. That's why I wanted to give a little bit of a counterbalance: to recognize and honour the price paid, not only by these children—because it's true that many of them were orphans who were living on the streets in Great Britain, but many of them were taken from homes. Many of them were ripped from their families because it was deemed that their families couldn't afford to keep them. Imagine that. There are other instances in history we could turn to to see similar circumstances. How horrendous.

Also, part of it was simply to save money. In Britain, it cost about five pounds a day to keep a child in an institution. In Australia, for example, it cost about 10 shillings. I don't know what the Canadian equivalent was, but it was cheaper. It was literally cheaper, to deal with their problem in Great Britain, to put them on a boat and ship them overseas and let somebody else deal with it. That was part of the background as well.

So, in honouring their descendants, I also wanted to acknowledge the darkness where this came from. Certainly, just about every country that received them has apologized. Ours—and I think quite rightfully—were really applauded in our federal government in 2010.

But again, I think that what's also telling to me here is the role of charity versus the role of government. We laud those who are charitable and who try to look after those who fall through the cracks, but isn't it also so critical—and this I send out to my libertarian friends: The role of government is critical. The role of government in protecting the rights of children is critical. We remember that in Dickensian England there were not laws in place to protect children. That's why he wrote his books. That's why Annie Macpherson did what she did, and others: Because there was no legal protection for children—and here, it wasn't much better. In Australia, it wasn't much better either. That's why this happened. To protect children is surely a government's first and most paramount duty: to protect those who can't protect themselves.

One of the saddest pictures I looked at when I did research for this was a picture of literally dozens of little children, with their little valises and suitcases, standing on a pier. Most of us—I would assert all of us here; we don't have First Nations represented in this House—are immigrants from somewhere. Our parents didn't have it easy, most of them, and they came over and they were subjected to hardship. But to see dozens of little children with their little valises, standing on a pier, being shipped off to strangers in a strange land and really forgotten, for all intents and purposes, by their government and by the government that received them; treated like natural resources in Nova Scotia and not human beings—par-

ticularly, I think, as a woman, because we weren't human beings until the 1920s either, under Canadian law; we were considered property. But these children were considered property, and that's how they were treated and that was their experience.

Many of them committed suicide. Many of them died. The lucky ones didn't. The ones who had a chance went on to populate a province and a country; to result in us all, in this moment, in this time, in this Legislature, coming together to honour them and to honour their descendants, finally. I want to say “finally”—you feel like you want to broadcast the “finally”—to honour them. After 350 years of a practice, finally, it's over; finally, we know about it; finally, we celebrate those children; finally, we lift them up and say, “Let's honour their memory. Let's do the right thing. Let's at the very least set aside a day to say that this is part of the story of Canada. This is part of the foundation of all of our DNA. This is part of our history: How remarkable.”

I'm so honoured and so privileged to be standing here and to be part of that story as a co-sponsor. I want to thank the member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry again for allowing me into this story, because it certainly has been riveting. I've spent more time researching it because I was simply fascinated by it, but I find it's hard to do without tears coming to one's eyes. I find it hard to do without thinking of the lost names, the lost family connections; those ties that should bind us that are finally being woven back together again.

Just to conclude, I want to say that I hope what we're doing here, really, as legislators, all of us, in some small way is what we would want to do as parents: to put our arms around those little children in that picture on the pier and to say, “You know, times are going to be very tough”—these little frightened, overwhelmed children—“but you should know,” speaking sometimes centuries, sometimes decades down the historical channel, “that your descendants will be talking about you in the House of Commons in Ottawa, the House of Commons in other parliamentary democracies and in the Ontario Legislature this day at this time, and your descendants, your actual physical descendants, will be watching this moment and will be heralding you, applauding you, and your descendants will be honouring you.” I wish we could go back in time and, in a sense, we are in this moment, to do just that.

1550

So thank you, Jim Brownell. Thank you for all you've done for this place, too, by the way, and thank you for allowing us to be part of this incredible story of Canada.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I'm honoured to rise in support of my colleague and friend from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry and his private member's bill to proclaim September 28 of each year as British Home Child Day.

This issue is one that is intensely personal for me and for many Ontarians. After all, one of the things that makes our province such a vibrant and diverse place is

the fact that so many of our people come from somewhere else, arriving here in Ontario to build a better life and a better future. They put down roots here, and whether we have just arrived or have been here for generations, we are all part of Ontario's story and its rich history.

My own grandfather, Alfred Charles Hoskins, was a British home child. He arrived here in Canada with his brother William exactly 100 years ago this very month. He was just 15 years old, his brother only 14.

With the clothes on their back and the now almost iconic trunk and bible, they left the port of Liverpool, England, bound for Quebec City aboard a steamship called the SS Tunisian. They came alone, like so many others. Their mother, my great-grandmother, had died of measles when they were young children and their father died of tuberculosis only a few years later. But they had each other, and they had hope for a better life.

But, like many others, when they arrived, they were separated. My grandfather Alfred went to work on a farm in Norwich in southwestern Ontario. He milked cows—40 of them—each day by hand. His brother William, or Uncle Bill as we knew him, was sent to a farm outside of Fergus.

I'm sure they were scared, and I bet they felt alone—alone and in an unfamiliar place doing unfamiliar work with unfamiliar people. After all, they were born in Islington which was, at that time, a very poor district of London, England. They were city boys, but they were also orphans, and so they knew how to get by with their skills and their resourcefulness—Charles Dickens's *Oliver* comes to mind. They were no doubt streetwise. They grew up in a workhouse and later, after their father fell ill, at an orphanage called Miss Macpherson's Home of Industry.

In other words, even at the young ages of 15 and 14, they were smart and experienced; they knew how to get by. These were skills and experiences shared by so many of the more than 100,000 British home children who were sent to Canada, as well as the tens of thousands more who were sent to Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. Unfortunately, many of these children, when they arrived, faced horrible challenges: abuse, poverty, loneliness and malnutrition.

My ancestors, it seems, were among the lucky ones. My grandfather was treated well in Norwich. He met a nice girl from Brantford. They married and moved to the town of Simcoe, where grandpa went to work for Borden's dairy. They had three children, including my father, William Alfred Hoskins, who, together with his two brothers, Don and Fred, and my mother, Jean, are watching today's proceedings.

Grandpa's brother Bill enlisted in the military not long after arriving and fought valiantly in World War I. He was deployed to France and fought at Ypres, where he took part in the battle of Passchendaele. On the battlefield, he was injured when the German forces used mustard gas on British and Canadian forces.

After the war, he returned home to Fergus, where he himself got married, and worked for 45 years as the

foreman in the sheet metal division of a washing machine factory. He was among the more than 10,000 British home children that we've heard about already who fought bravely for Canada in the world wars.

The history of the British home children, of the challenges they faced and the difficult obstacles they overcame, is my family's history. It is my history, as it is for the estimated 10% of Canadians who are descended in some way from British home children.

Theirs is a remarkable history, and it is a history that rings true for all Ontarians whose mothers and fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers made the sometimes perilous journey to Canada in search of a better life. It is history that inspires us to keep pushing forward, to keep growing, working hard and seeking out new opportunities, in their memory and in memory of all those who came before.

I'm here before you today because of my grandfather's fortitude, resilience and determination. I'm proud to honour his memory, and I am proud to carry his name forward into history. Dad, I know that grandpa would be proud to see what you have done with your life, and the wonderful legacy that you and mom have created together.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mrs. Donna H. Cansfield: I am proud to rise in support of my friend from Stormont-Dundas-South Gengarry and in support of this particular bill.

I'd like to share with you what David Cameron said: "One year on from the British government's apology and the tragedy of thousands of lost childhoods is still as sad and shocking as ever. We should remember the hardship and heartache experienced by those children and their families as a result of these misguided child migration schemes."

Our own government said the British home child year, 2010, "is a meaningful way to acknowledge this chapter of Canadian history ... recognizes the hardships suffered by the British home children and their perseverance and courage in overcoming" them.

The year 2010 was designated the year of the British home child as a meaningful way for the government of Canada to recognize the hardships suffered by British home children, and their perseverance and their courage in overcoming these hardships.

Here we are today, in 2011. We haven't had that opportunity, so it's time for us to make history, hopefully, this afternoon, and make sure that all of us do follow up in support.

As was heard, from 1849 to 1960, approximately 100,000 children were brought to Canada by religious and philanthropic groups. When I did my homework, I kept reading about hardships, and I couldn't understand, as a mother—how do you send your child away? Even as a relative, it's so difficult. I thought what I would do is go back in our history. I was very saddened to hear and read what I did. Let me quote for you. This is the *Manitoba Daily Press* of 1879. It speaks to the harsh realities

of these children. The article spoke of the dumping of paupers from Great Britain upon Canada. They said that such a "ruinous scheme" would be met "with most determined opposition from every man who has a grain of common sense," but not for the reason you might think, because the paper goes on to state, "Pauper immigration at any time is a bad thing for the country," not because it was going to displace the children, but in fact it was going to be bad for the country as a whole.

This speech was actually delivered by Mr. J. Rankin, who was a member of Parliament for Canada, and he delivered it at a church meeting in Wolverhampton: "The emigration of children in industrial schools and orphanages is by far the best possible method of disposing of them. The method of placing our children in our colonies in good homes is the best for the children themselves, and the cheapest method of disposing of them. It would be just and fair, as well as prudent that some portion of the grant might be used for purposes of emigration, and the Central Emigration Society has on several occasions pressed upon the notice of the Home Secretary this definite proposition, namely, that the government grant," should be paid in the course of time.

1600

In essence, they sold the children. Do you know why? The cost of outfitting and conveying a child to Canada was £15, but the cost for the government to keep the child in an orphanage or a home was about 9 pounds and 2 shillings a year, so in two years the cost was covered, and the average stay in a home in England was five years. In essence, it was a way for them to get rid of their children. What a sad reflection. Wasn't it a good thing that they actually apologized for that part of their history?

But we were just as complicit because we accepted those children without asking why. We really accepted those children without asking why. We warehoused those children. There were some 50,000 who actually came not from the industrial homes where they had some training, but the young ones who were so tiny who didn't have any education and really didn't have anything, and they were indentured to farms. They were separated. Our government actually could have relaxed and changed the absurd restrictions and immigration policies that were placed on these children, but we didn't, so 78,000 children were exported to Canada too young and without knowledge.

The bottom line, as I said, is that both Canada and the British government supported this immigration program well into the first child law, which did not come into place until 1927 in this country. Children were sold to Canadian farmers. Siblings were separated from their families, never to see each other. There's no question that some children were very fortunate and found wonderful families, but many children ran away. They ran away because it was so hurtful where they had been sent.

But in spite of this, the children survived. They survived. They had the fortitude. They were able to build a family, build this country and support this country, as you heard, in so many ways, in spite of what we had done. Isn't it time that we actually apologized for our

behaviour and our complicity in this whole scheme of things? And isn't it time that we also remember that children are still being sold in this world and that we need to all stand up against child slavery? We all need to remember that it's happening in this country as much as it is happening in others and that we each bear a responsibility to ensure that this is stopped. I'm not sure of all the ways that we can do it, but I do know that if we lend our voices, we can make a difference.

I'm pleased to support my good friend, and I share what the member from Parkdale-High Park said: I'm going to miss you.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): The honourable member, Mr. Brownell, has two minutes for his response.

Mr. Jim Brownell: First of all, let me say what an honour and a privilege it is to have four colleagues stand in the House today, the members from Parkdale-High Park, from Leeds-Grenville, from Etobicoke Centre and certainly the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. Can you imagine? Wonderful.

I can say that your words—I set out the road map here today, and I kind of had to rush at the end of it, but you filled in all the blanks. I have to say that the words that you told, the stories that you shared and the passion that you had in your voices—there were many tears shed up there in the gallery today. I saw you.

Certainly there should be tears. I never knew my grandmother, but I've heard stories. I think of my aunt Hilda in Cornwall. I doubt if she's watching the parliamentary channel, but I'm sure she'll hear the story. I look at my mom. She's in the hospital right now and I'm sure she's watching on her hospital TV what's unfolding here today. But I do want to say that it's these stories that must continue to be told. It's the stories that have to be told. I see two young folks up in the galleries there right now, Faith and Shannon McRae. It was just last fall that we had an opportunity to do a little bit of theatre, myself being the farmer and you being the home children, and what a great day that was. You missed school today, but you got, in my opinion, a great history lesson here in the Legislature, and I want to thank you for coming. I want to thank you for joining all these other folks who have travelled here today, some from long distances, and if your name wasn't mentioned here today, there were just too many names and I had to rush through this. But from the bottom of my heart, I want to say thank you.

This is my last chance for a private member's bill, and probably the last chance to make any presentation, but if I can leave the Legislature knowing that the British home children are recognized in Ontario as they were in Canada last year and on a Canadian stamp, I will be a happy man. So thank you all for what you've done.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): I think everyone is here on your side. Okay, we will go on to voting. The time for this—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): I was trying to cheat, but they won't let me. We have to suspend for

eight minutes, because that's when our time would be for voting, in case people are in their offices. I'm sorry, but blame it on the Clerk.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: Can I ask for unanimous consent that we move this along?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Unfortunately, during private members' bills, we don't have the same rules as when the House is sitting as a whole, so we can't do unanimous consent on that. It's written pretty hard copy in the standing orders.

This House is suspended for six minutes.

The House suspended proceedings from 1606 to 1612.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Order. I just ask members to please take their seats. The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS AMENDMENT ACT (COMMENCEMENT OF TERM OF OFFICES DATE), 2011

LOI DE 2011 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES ÉLECTIONS MUNICIPALES (DATE DE COMMENCEMENT DES MANDATS)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): We will first deal with ballot item number 13, standing in the name of Mr. Lalonde.

Monsieur Lalonde has moved second reading of Bill 153, An Act to amend the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 to change the date on which the term of offices begins and to make related amendments.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Monsieur Lalonde.

Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde: I would ask that this bill be referred to the general government standing committee.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): So ordered.

BANNING COLLUSION IN ELECTORAL ADVERTISING ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 INTERDISANT LA COLLUSION DANS LE CADRE DE LA PUBLICITÉ ÉLECTORALE

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): We'll now deal with ballot item number 14.

Mr. Arnott has moved second reading of Bill 195, An Act to amend the Election Finances Act to ban collusion in electoral advertising.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard some noes.

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

We will call in the members after the next vote.

BRITISH HOME CHILD DAY ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 SUR LE JOUR DES PETITS IMMIGRÉS BRITANNIQUES

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): We will now deal with ballot item number 15.

Mr. Brownell has moved second reading of Bill 185, An Act to proclaim British Home Child Day.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

BRITISH HOME CHILD DAY ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 SUR LE JOUR DES PETITS IMMIGRÉS BRITANNIQUES

Mr. Brownell moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 185, An Act to proclaim British Home Child Day / Projet de loi 185, Loi proclamant le Jour des petits immigrants britanniques.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard some noes.

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

We will call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1614 to 1619.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Order. I'd just ask members to please take their seats.

BANNING COLLUSION IN ELECTORAL ADVERTISING ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 INTERDISANT LA COLLUSION DANS LE CADRE DE LA PUBLICITÉ ÉLECTORALE

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Mr. Arnott has moved second reading of Bill 195. All those in favour of the motion will please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Arnott, Ted
Clark, Steve
DiNovo, Cheri

Hardeman, Ernie
Klees, Frank
MacLeod, Lisa

Marchese, Rosario
O'Toole, John
Prue, Michael

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): All those opposed to the motion will please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Albanese, Laura
Arthurs, Wayne
Balkissoon, Bas
Berardinetti, Lorenzo
Best, Margaret

Dickson, Joe
Hoskins, Eric
Jaczek, Helena
Johnson, Rick
Kular, Kuldip

Rinaldi, Lou
Ruprecht, Tony
Sergio, Mario
Smith, Monique
Sousa, Charles

Brownell, Jim
Cansfield, Donna H.
Colle, Mike
Delaney, Bob
Dhillon, Vic

Levac, Dave
Naqvi, Yasir
Pendergast, Leeanna
Phillips, Gerry
Qaadri, Shafiq

Takhar, Harinder S.
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Zimmer, David

Berardinetti, Lorenzo
Best, Margaret
Brownell, Jim
Cansfield, Donna H.
Clark, Steve
Colle, Mike
Delaney, Bob
Dhillon, Vic
Dickson, Joe

Johnson, Rick
Klees, Frank
Kular, Kuldip
Lalonde, Jean-Marc
Levac, Dave
MacLeod, Lisa
Marchese, Rosario
Naqvi, Yasir
O'Toole, John

Rinaldi, Lou
Ruprecht, Tony
Sergio, Mario
Smith, Monique
Sousa, Charles
Takhar, Harinder S.
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Zimmer, David

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):

The ayes are 9; the nays are 28.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): I declare the motion lost.

Second reading negatived.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): We'll open the doors for 30 seconds.

BRITISH HOME CHILD DAY ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 SUR LE JOUR DES PETITS IMMIGRÉS BRITANNIQUES

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Mr. Brownell has moved third reading of Bill 185.

All those in favour of the motion will please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura
Arnott, Ted
Arthurs, Wayne
Balkissoon, Bas

DiNovo, Cheri
Hardeman, Ernie
Hoskins, Eric
Jaczek, Helena

Pendergast, Leeanna
Phillips, Gerry
Prue, Michael
Qaadri, Shafiq

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Opposed?

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 38; the nays are 0.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): I declare the motion carried. Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Orders of the day.

Hon. Gerry Phillips: I move adjournment of the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

This House stands adjourned until Monday, May 30, at 10:30 a.m.

The House adjourned at 1624.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Steve Peters

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman, Tonia Grannum

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Aggelonitis, Hon. / L'hon. Sophia (LIB)	Hamilton Mountain	Minister of Revenue / Ministre du Revenu Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Arthurs, Wayne (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (LIB)	London West / London-Ouest	Attorney General / Procureur général Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud-Ouest	
Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Health Promotion and Sport / Ministre de la Promotion de la santé et du Sport
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Brotten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Brown, Michael A. (LIB)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Brownell, Jim (LIB)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Caplan, David (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Carroll, Hon. / L'hon. Aileen (LIB)	Barrie	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism and Culture / Ministre du Tourisme et de la Culture
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Crozier, Bruce (LIB)	Essex	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (LIB)	Prince Edward–Hastings	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (LIB)	Windsor-Tecumseh	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby-Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay-Superior North / Thunder Bay-Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry / Ministre du Développement du Nord, des Mines et des Forêts
Hampton, Howard (NDP)	Kenora-Rainy River	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Hoy, Pat (LIB)	Chatham-Kent-Essex	
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West-Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest-Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges-Markham	
Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)	Brampton-Springdale	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Johnson, Rick (LIB)	Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock	
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin-Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket-Aurora	
Kormos, Peter (NDP)	Welland	Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
Kular, Kuldip (LIB)	Bramalea-Gore-Malton	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Jean-Marc (LIB)	Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	
Leal, Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	
Levac, Dave (LIB)	Brant	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean-Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga-Brampton South / Mississauga-Brampton-Sud	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity-Spadina	
Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Cambridge	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay-Atikokan	
McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Premier / Premier ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
McMeekin, Ted (LIB)	Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Westdale	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa-Orléans	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa-Vanier	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound-Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East-Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est-Stoney Creek	
Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Mitchell, Hon. / L'hon. Carol (LIB)	Huron-Bruce	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Moridi, Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York—Simcoe	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
Naqvi, Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
Oraziotti, David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pendergast, Leeanna (LIB)	Kitchener—Conestoga	
Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (LIB)	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (LIB)	Scarborough—Agincourt	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches—East York	
Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (LIB)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Economic Development and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Ramal, Khalil (LIB)	London—Fanshawe	
Ramsay, David (LIB)	Timiskaming—Cochrane	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland—Quinte West	
Ruprecht, Tony (LIB)	Davenport	
Sandals, Liz (LIB)	Guelph	
Savoline, Joyce (PC)	Burlington	
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Monique M. (LIB)	Nipissing	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Sorbara, Greg (LIB)	Vaughan	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Sterling, Norman W. (PC)	Carleton—Mississippi Mills	
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	Deputy Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de parti reconnu
Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga—Erindale	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Van Bommel, Maria (LIB)	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	
Wilkinson, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Perth—Wellington	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe—Grey	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)	Kitchener—Waterloo	
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Zimmer, David (LIB)	Willowdale	
Vacant	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	

**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉ PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

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Robert Bailey, Gilles Bisson
Kim Craitor, Bob Delaney
Garfield Dunlop, Phil McNeely
Yasir Naqvi, John O'Toole
Maria Van Bommel
Clerks / Greffiers: Valerie Quioc Lim, Sylwia Przedziecki

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Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

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Laura Albanese, Toby Barrett
Bob Delaney, Kevin Daniel Flynn
Pat Hoy, Helena Jaczek
Norm Miller, Leeanna Pendergast
Peter Tabuns
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przedziecki

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permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jim Brownell
Jim Brownell, Steve Clark
Kuldip Kular, Dave Levac
Amrit Mangat, Rosario Marchese
Bill Mauro, David Oraziatti
Joyce Savoline
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

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permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod
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Donna H. Cansfield, Aileen Carroll
Howard Hampton, Ernie Hardeman
Lisa MacLeod, Leeanna Pendergast
Jim Wilson
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**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de
la justice**

Chair / Président: Lorenzo Berardinetti
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Reza Moridi
Bas Balkissoon, Lorenzo Berardinetti
Ted Chudleigh, Mike Colle
Christine Elliott, Peter Kormos
Reza Moridi, Lou Rinaldi
David Zimmer
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Bas Balkissoon
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Yasir Naqvi
Bas Balkissoon, Steve Clark
Joe Dickson, Sylvia Jones
Amrit Mangat, Yasir Naqvi
Michael Prue, Mario Sergio
Maria Van Bommel
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent
des comptes publics**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Peter Shurman
Wayne Arthurs, Aileen Carroll
France Gélinas, Jerry J. Ouellette
David Ramsay, Liz Sandals
Peter Shurman, Norman W. Sterling
David Zimmer
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Michael Prue
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Paul Miller
David Caplan, Kim Craitor
Jeff Leal, Gerry Martiniuk
Paul Miller, Bill Murdoch
Michael Prue, Lou Rinaldi
Tony Ruprecht
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Vic Dhillon
Vic Dhillon, Cheri DiNovo
Rick Johnson, Sylvia Jones
Jean-Marc Lalonde, Ted McMeekin
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Legislative Assembly
of Ontario

Second Session, 39th Parliament

Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 39^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**



**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Monday 30 May 2011

Lundi 30 mai 2011

Speaker
Honourable Steve Peters

Clerk
Deborah Deller

Président
L'honorable Steve Peters

Greffière
Deborah Deller

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 30 May 2011

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 30 mai 2011

The House met at 1030.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Good morning. Please remain standing for the Lord's Prayer, followed by a moment of silence for inner thought and personal reflection.

Prayers.

WEARING OF CARNATIONS

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I believe we have unanimous consent to wear carnations today in the House in honour of multiple sclerosis day at the Legislature

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Agreed? Agreed.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar: I would like to welcome to the Ontario Legislature today members of the Society of Management Accountants of Ontario, fellow CMAs. They're sitting in the east and west lobbies—I think they got split up somehow—Janet Treasure, Caroline Kolch, Larry Tomlin, John Hsu and Scott Miller. I want to welcome them to the Legislature.

I would also like to welcome Michael Scott, a student from the University of Toronto who is working in my office as an intern this summer. He is seated in the east gallery as well. Welcome to the Legislature.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I'd like to introduce in the House today Bill and Liz Murphy from Kanata, who, in an auction, bought this day at Queen's Park with—I'm not their MPP, though. They're actually from Kanata. But they were supporting the Bonnechere Union Public Library, which is in my riding, of course, and we're thankful to have their support.

Joining them today is Bill's brother, Geoff, and his sister, Margaret Imbleau. Welcome them all to the House and Queen's Park, please.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to welcome Mr. John Clifford, chair of the MS Society board of directors; Mrs. Kim Steele, who is the manager of strategic initiatives; Mrs. Barbara Dickson, who is a person living with MS; as well as Mrs. Norine Thomasen, who is a caregiver to a person living with MS. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Carol Mitchell: I'm very pleased to rise to welcome everyone involved today in Foodland Ontario's celebration of local foods. I encourage all members of the Legislature to come out and enjoy all the good things that

grow in Ontario. Thank you to all the farmers, processors and producers who are in attendance and later today.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: We're happy to have here today Eleanor McMahon with us on the first day of Toronto's Bike Month. She's the CEO and founder of the Share the Road Cycling Coalition and a respected advocate for policies supporting safe cycling; also Hamish Wilson, who has been another long-time advocate for bike lanes in Toronto.

Mr. Khalil Ramal: I'd like to welcome the chair of the Melanoma Network of Canada, Annette Cyr, and also Dr. Rosen and Mr. Munn and one of the activists, Jeff Lyon, in the east gallery here. Welcome.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I'd like to welcome my friend Maggie Conway, who's here today. As well, I'd like to welcome two of the hardest-working women in North Bay: my constituency staff, Amber Livingstone and Pauline Carriere, who are down today. I welcome them to the Legislature.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: I would like to introduce, and I'm pleased to welcome, the family of page Rachel Santini from York South-Weston. I'm pleased to introduce her mother, Barbara Santini; her father, Peter; her sister, Sara Santini; her cousins Daniella Ricci, Laura Ricci and Amanda Ricci; her grandmother, Luisa Martin, and her grandfather, Ceaser Martin; her grandmother, Corrada Santini, and her grandfather, Filippo Santini; and also her teacher, Michael Iacobelli. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Christopher Bentley: Could I welcome to the Legislature three interns who are working both at the Ministry of the Attorney General and at aboriginal affairs—Kaylee Silver, Lindsay Jenner and Christian von Donat—who are in the gallery today.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I would like to introduce Dr. Brian Stevenson, the president of Lakehead University, who is about to come in at any moment.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I am very happy to introduce Josh Morgan and his master's of public administration students from the great University of Western Ontario to the House today.

Mr. David Caplan: We're fortunate today to have four interns from the Ontario Medical Association joining us: Greg Oman, Rebecca Robb, Melissa Gifkins and Bailie McGurn. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Bill Mauro: I have three people I would like to introduce today visiting from Thunder Bay's Lakehead University: the president and vice-chancellor, Brian Stevenson; the vice-president of external relations, Lee Gould; and the vice-president of administration and finance, Mike Pawlowski.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I would also like to reinforce the welcome to Eleanor McMahon of Share the Road, and I'd like to welcome Brian Smith, who's the executive director of greenwood community services. He's here because he bid on lunch with me, and I look forward to having him in the House today.

Hon. Margaret R. Best: Good morning. I understand that there is a Mr. Bruce Cosburn in the Legislature today, and I would like to take this opportunity to welcome him to the Legislature.

Mr. Mike Colle: I would like to introduce "Brother Jeff" Lyons, who's here today. He has done a lot of great work fighting prostate cancer over the years. He's now taken on the battle of fighting melanoma. Welcome, Jeff.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): On behalf of the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound and page Caleb Jones, I'd like to welcome his father, Bruce Jones; his mother, Ruth Jones; and his sister, Bethany Jones, to the Legislature today. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Seated in the Speaker's gallery today, in recognition of MS day here at Queen's Park, I'd like to welcome Cathy Topping and Pat Chatten to Queen's Park today. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Seated in the Speaker's gallery this morning, I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome a good friend of mine, Don Cosens, along with friends Charles Humber and Ed Ralph. Welcome to Queen's Park today.

USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN HOUSE

Mr. Peter Kormos: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: In view of recent news reports, would the Speaker now and finally impose an absolute ban on BlackBerrys in the chamber to protect the privacy of members?

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I remind the honourable member that the Speaker is but a servant of the House. If the Speaker had his way, notwithstanding it is a great Ontario company, there would be no BlackBerrys in this chamber.

VISITORS

Hon. Charles Sousa: I apologize, but I do see some prominent members of my community—Tony Belas and Fernanda Pereira—who have arrived, and I would just like to welcome them to the House.

1040

ORAL QUESTIONS

TAXATION

Mrs. Christine Elliott: My question is for the Premier. This weekend, the Ontario PCs released our plan to give Ontario families tax and hydro bill relief on the way to balancing the books. Changebook puts forward an income-sharing plan that will save a typical two-income

family \$476 of their taxable income. We have a plan to save 5% more of the tax they pay on income up to \$75,000. We have a plan to save families more than \$275 on their hydro bills. Premier McGuinty and his team don't have a credible plan to get control over reckless spending, to balance the books or to offer families relief. He refuses to release a plan publicly.

Why won't you come clean with Ontario families, who already know you'll balance the books by increasing taxes?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I appreciate the question raised by my honourable colleague. I'm not sure it is fair to describe what was released during the course of the weekend as a plan; I think it's really more a case of 229 risky promises, characterized as well by a \$10-billion hole. There was a lot of negativity and a lot of pessimism that emerged from that particular weekend.

I just want to take this opportunity to congratulate Ontarians on the great work that they've been doing. They have, in fact, been building together. Ontarians, during the course of the past eight years, have built better education in the province of Ontario, they have built better health care and they have built a stronger economy. That's what happens when you work together and continue to build together.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mrs. Christine Elliott: For eight years now, Premier McGuinty has raised taxes. He has invented new taxes. He has even become the first Premier in Ontario history to use one tax grab to hide another tax grab, during the HST eco fee disaster.

Premier McGuinty is incapable of coming up with a plan that does not include tax increases. An Ontario PC government will balance the budget and lower taxes as part of our Changebook. Why not show Ontario families that, to balance the provincial budget, you'll hit them with a tax increase that puts an even bigger hole in their family budget?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: It saddens me to have to report that, in that list of 229 risky promises, there is—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Leeds will withdraw the comment. I heard it earlier under his breath, and I would appreciate him not using that.

Mr. Steve Clark: I withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Again, that negativity and pessimism can't help but emerge from time to time.

In that list of 229 risky promises, characterized by a gaping \$10-billion hole, sadly, there is no plan there to create jobs. Worse than that, there is a plan to get rid of 50,000 clean energy jobs in the province of Ontario.

We think we know where Ontarians stand on this particular matter. Not only do they want clean air for their children to breathe, but they want those new clean energy jobs. They want us to seize those new manufacturing opportunities and be at the forefront here in—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I just remind all the members that we do have a number of guests who are here visiting the Legislature today, and they too would like to hear both the questions and the answers.

Final supplementary.

Mrs. Christine Elliott: Premier McGuinty thinks he'll get away with his secret plan to raise taxes if he just follows the same steps he took in the past. In 2003, and again in 2007, he swore up and down that he wouldn't raise taxes. But after the election, what did he do? He raised taxes. As Dr. Phil says, the best predictor of future behaviour is past behaviour.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): We'll start with the member for Simcoe-Grey and the government House leader. If they want to have a cross-floor discussion, take it outside of this chamber.

I heard that the Minister of Community Safety couldn't hear the question, because I heard him comment, "What did she say?" So I would just ask that the government members be respectful of the questions and that the opposition side be respectful of the answers.

Please continue.

Mrs. Christine Elliott: The fact of the matter is that you don't want to change, but Ontario families want change. The choice they face on October 6 is a McGuinty Liberal carbon tax and a 2% increase in the HST, or an Ontario PC government that lowers taxes so that families have more to share with their loved ones. Why can't you be honest about your plan to raise taxes?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Again, my honourable colleague says that they are—for months, in fact years, they've spoken out against the health premium, but now they're going to keep it. For years, now, they've been telling us they stand firmly and foursquare against the HST, but now they're going to keep it. This is what I'd ask Ontarians to keep in mind as we join the debate, which I think is going to be very important and very earnest.

The Conservative Party is telling us they intend to find \$2.3 billion in cuts by way of savings. They want to find \$2.3 billion in cuts by way of savings. The last Conservative government claimed that they would find \$500 million in cuts by way of savings. I want you to remember what happened back then to our schools and our health care. Imagine what's going to happen when they quadruple the number of cuts they intend to find inside government services.

TAXATION

Mrs. Christine Elliott: My question is back to the Premier. Let's be clear: Premier McGuinty is going to raise taxes to pay for his reckless spending—there's no question—and the downgrade by the Fitch rating shows that bond agencies don't believe the Premier has the self-restraint to stop reckless spending. So Premier McGuinty

is going to do what he always does: He's going to raise taxes. He raised taxes after a pledge not to raise taxes. Not even a written guarantee protects Ontario families from Premier McGuinty.

An Ontario PC government will lower taxes. How can you keep raising taxes for Ontario families who already have sacrificed too much?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I want to take the opportunity to congratulate and thank Ontarians. Because of their efforts, our schools are back on track, our health care is back on track, our economy is back on track, jobs are coming back and we are leading the nation in terms of recovery from the recession. We're back on track.

What we have today is a proposal on the part of the Conservative Party of Ontario—the PCs—to go ahead with a dangerous, reckless and risky plan that has at its centre a \$10-billion hole. We know what that is going to mean. It's going to compromise and jeopardize our economic recovery, it's going to jeopardize our schools and it's going to jeopardize our health care.

Ontarians don't want to go back. We've worked so hard together to get on track. We want to keep moving forward. We want to keep building together.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mrs. Christine Elliott: Here is the contrast: An Ontario PC government will lower taxes; Premier McGuinty will raise taxes. He can't help it; it's what he does.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The Minister of Education, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the member from Peterborough will please come to order.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): You just did say something.

Please continue.

Mrs. Christine Elliott: The Premier can't help it. It's what he does; it's just in his nature. He raises taxes, and he's not going to do anything to stop his reckless spending. So there's no other thing to do; he has to raise taxes. Even the Premier has been saying he's going to keep doing what he has been doing. That's code for more reckless spending and more tax increases. Ontario families are looking for change: change that gives them the relief they need and the more time together that they cherish.

How did you get to be so tired and so out of touch with all the families out there who need a change, relief and some respect?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: It is true: We intend to continue to work with teachers and with students and with moms and dads to further raise those test scores and graduation rates. It is true that we intend to work with our doctors and our nurses and all our health care professionals to improve the quality of care we deliver to all our families. It's true that we intend to continue working with our businesses, both big and small, employers and workers, to further strengthen this economy, to create more jobs, to land more foreign direct investments and to ensure that we have the economic capacity to continue to

support important social programs as well as our schools and health care. So it's true: We intend to pursue a positive, optimistic direction on behalf of Ontario families.

1050

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Final supplementary.

Mrs. Christine Elliott: Not even a global recession could stop Premier McGuinty from raising taxes, and he needs the money now more than ever because he's not going to stop reckless spending on pet projects. Premier McGuinty can't stop raising taxes. Well, we can, and we will.

The choice Ontario families face on October 6 is Premier McGuinty, who will increase taxes and throw the money away on reckless spending and waste, or an Ontario PC government that will save them more of their taxable income.

Premier, why do you think Ontario families will sacrifice four more years for you to raise their taxes over and over again?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: What Ontario families are not prepared to sacrifice is the progress they've made in their schools, the progress they've made in their health care and the progress when it comes to turning this economy around.

We are inherently positive, optimistic, successful, determined, resolute builders. That's what we do in Ontario. They don't get that. They don't understand who we are. That's how we've enjoyed the successes. It hasn't just been our government alone, so we came up with a plan. At the end of the day, Ontarians came together, we committed ourselves to improving our schools, we committed ourselves to improving our health care, we committed ourselves to standing up for our economy. That's the success we've had; that's the success we'll continue.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Member from Leeds, it would be useful if you were in your seat.

I heard somebody say that it's getting a little rowdy. I think it would be great, as we enter our final week, if we could have one question period with silence.

New question.

TAXATION

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Premier. Last week, I announced that a New Democrat government would restore Ontario's general corporate tax rate and focus on the priorities that matter to families: making life affordable and ensuring health care is actually there when you need it.

In the same week, the Liberal Premier of British Columbia said her government would increase corporate tax rates to give more help to people. My question is, is she a reckless, job-killing rookie, or is she wondering whether family budgets should come before the corporate bottom line?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I appreciate the question from my honourable colleague, but I'd like to think we're

bringing something here which she fails to recognize is absolutely essential to govern in the 21st century, and that's balance. We have to ensure that we have in place a strong economy to support our schools and our health care and our social programs, all of which I know she supports. We have to ensure that we have an economic environment here that is inviting to business, that is inviting to our entrepreneurs to continue to invest.

I am proud to report on a couple of facts. First of all, we are second only to California in all of North America in attracting foreign direct investment into our province. Secondly, we are leading the country when it comes to our businesses investing in new equipment and new technology. They are enhancing their productivity, and they're hiring more people.

In April, we had the highest job-creation month in the last 22 years in our province.

The fact of the matter is, we're getting the balance right.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: In October, families are going to have a choice—a choice between corporate tax cuts and backward tax schemes that reward the wealthiest Ontarians, or New Democrat proposals to make life easier for all Ontario families.

Eight years ago, the Premier offered a similar critique of these corporate tax giveaways. What changed? Why did the Premier decide to side with the Conservatives?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Again, I'd ask my honourable colleague to kindly look at the big picture in terms of what we've done. We have not just reduced the tax burden on our businesses, and we have not just reduced the tax burden on our families, which I would ask her to acknowledge at some point in time, but we've done a number of things that help families with pocketbook issues.

For example, we have in place—the first of its kind—the Ontario child benefit. It's helping 1.3 million Ontario children. It's \$1,100 per child.

Full-day kindergarten: That initiative alone is saving a family thousands of dollars on an annual basis in terms of their child care costs that they otherwise would have had to pay. At the same time, we're putting in place a program, the first of its kind in North America, that gives Ontario kids a leg up on the competition. It's giving them a head start in their studies at school.

Those are the kinds of initiatives that we're putting in place as a matter of balance: a strong economy, strong social programs, strong public services.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I haven't been leader of the New Democrats for all that very long, but I've been on the job long enough to know that people in this province are feeling squeezed, and they need some help.

Today's news reports that CEOs at Canada's top largest 100 companies saw their compensation jump by 13% last year. That's \$700,000 a year. Most families would have to work a decade to see that kind of money.

Why is the government funding tax relief for CEOs getting six-figure raises but refusing to help families struggling with the cost of hydro and home heating bills?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: On the matter of pocketbook issues, again, I'd ask my honourable colleague to acknowledge that we have put in place a permanent income tax cut. The average family is benefiting from a permanent income tax cut this year of \$355 and every year going forward—I said \$355.

We have in place a new energy and property tax credit; it's up to \$1,025 every year. We have a new Ontario senior homeowners' property tax grant that's \$500 annually. We doubled that from what it used to be before. We have a clean energy benefit that's reducing our electricity bills by 10%. We've also doubled student assistance.

Again, I want to report to my colleague, and I'm proud of this, that we are the fastest job creator in the country. In April, we created more jobs—over 50,000—in one month than we have in the last 22 years.

I'd like to think we're going in the right direction.

TAXATION

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also to the Premier. After eight years in office, the Premier seems to have forgotten the people who sent him here. This is what they're telling us. Larry Vanneer writes: "My family and myself are really struggling with the rise in cost of everything. Our hydro bill has doubled since January, the price of fuel makes it difficult to get to work and the price of basic food makes it difficult to eat healthy."

Why does the Premier think a tax cut for CEOs getting six-figure salary increases is more important than taking the HST off Larry's hydro and home heating?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I want to tell you what Mario Velasco said. He's one of the first people hired by CS Wind to build wind towers in Windsor. Before being hired, he had been working at temporary jobs. This is what he said: "I have two kids at home, pay rent and lots of bills. So this job is going to help a lot with that."

I think one of the most important things we can do together to help the people of Ontario, and to help families specifically, is to put in place the kinds of measures that we have, which are helping to create new jobs here. In particular, we're seizing an exciting new opportunity in clean energy technology and manufacturing. We're positioning ourselves at the forefront of North America. We're creating thousands of new jobs.

I think one of the most important things we can do for our families is to give them that opportunity, give them that hopefulness, reinforce their sense of optimism and create jobs for them.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: This is about the Premier's priorities. Tina Carter writes this: "The price of everything seems to keep going up. Even groceries are getting hard to buy, but wages are not going up at all...."

"I have two children ... and both my husband and I work full-time jobs...."

"It should not be this hard."

If Tina works a decade, she might make as much as the average CEO is collecting in his bonus cheque. Why is the Premier making corporate tax cuts a priority but telling people like Tina that he can't provide HST relief for home heating and hydro bills?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I want to remind my honourable colleague—at some point, I hope that she will admit to this: She asked us for months on end to reduce electricity bills by 8%. We said that was insufficient, and we reduced them by 10%. That's 10% off the whole bill; that's 2% more than she had proposed. So I'd ask her to admit to that at some point in time.

I want to remind my honourable colleague as well that our plan is working even in her hometown of Hamilton, which I'm proud to report. During the recession, unemployment there was at 9.1%. This last month, unemployment in the city of Hamilton was down to 5.8%. Time after time, I have stood in this House and talked about our partnerships with businesses in Hamilton to create jobs in that very community. Our plan is working, even in her own community, and I'd ask her at some point in time to admit to the success that we're enjoying by building together.

1100

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Wine gets better with age. After eight years of Liberal majority rule, this government is more like socks—it's time for a change.

We need change in Ontario because this government has not been listening to people like Marion Roth, for example. Marion says this:

"We are going down fast and at the rate everything is going up (except his wage) we may lose our house by the end of the year...."

"Stress levels are unbelievable. Choices of food or oil for the furnace, or can we pay the hydro and water bills this month are things we have never had to worry about before."

The Premier will be facing voters like Marion Roth very soon. Does he have any explanation for his misguided priorities for her?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I met a fellow by the name of Mike Walker, who's working at Samco, a solar stand producer. This is what he said: "My daughters (10 and 13) always speak of the environment, its protection and ways we can do our part. I found myself out of work during the recession and, coincidentally, the growing solar industry provided me with a job opportunity that is close to my children's hearts."

So I think that we've hit the sweet spot. What we have in Ontario now is a growing industry that is not only cleaning up our air, it's not only generating revenues, but it's also, at the same time, creating jobs for moms and dads so they can go home and look their kids in the eye with a sense of pride and optimism.

We are inherently builders. Right now, we're in the middle of building an exciting new clean energy industry. We're going to be at the forefront in North America.

GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Mr. Norm Miller: My question is to the Premier. An Ontario PC government will attack waste and rein in runaway spending. Premier McGuinty will not. He'll just raise taxes again to pay for his reckless spending sprees, like his secret deals with public sector union bosses.

Premier, Ontario families make sacrifices to pay your tax increases, only to find out you throw money away on secret raises and secret bonuses, the latest being a secret bonus to get jail guards to show up for work. It's not a matter of if there will be more reckless spending on secret deals, but who's next and how much?

Why should Ontario families pay millions for you to spend recklessly on your sweetheart deals?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I think what we should focus on by way of those preparatory remarks is the reference to public sector union bosses, because that hearkened back to another time that we had in the province of Ontario. Every once in a while they can't help but allow that negativity and that pessimism and that anger to emerge and reveal itself. That's not who Ontarians are.

I want to, again, consider what Ontarians have been able to accomplish during the last eight years by working hard and building together. They've turned our schools around: The kids are doing better, and we've had no strikes. They've turned our health care around: Ontarians are getting more access to more care than they've ever had before. They've turned this economy around: They've pulled ahead out of a very difficult recession, and jobs are coming back.

That's who we are—not that negativity, not that—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary.

Mr. Norm Miller: I guess the Premier has forgotten about his \$17-billion deficit.

The secret OPSEU pay increase was a pretty reckless use of money that Ontario families sacrificed to pay; the 10% merit bonuses to eHealth executives—reckless. Paying jail guards a bonus to show up for work is just plain reckless.

The choice Ontario families face on October 6 is more reckless tax increases so Premier McGuinty can continue his reckless spending, or an Ontario PC government that will lower their taxes and stop the reckless spending sprees on your sweetheart deals.

How do you justify increasing taxes even more to pay for your reckless spending sprees?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: If we're going to use the word "reckless," I think we have to use it in the context of those 228 promises, and I think we have to use it to describe that \$10-billion hole that's going to put our fragile economic recovery at risk. It's going to put the progress that we've achieved together in our schools and our health care at risk.

I don't think Ontarians want to go there. I think they want to keep moving forward. I think they want to keep building together. I think they're tired of the past. They've work so hard to get their schools back on track, they've worked so hard to get their health care back and they've worked so hard together to get our economy back on track.

They want to keep moving forward. They want to continue to be optimistic. They want to continue to be positive. They see a bright future ahead for themselves, their children and their grandchildren. They know that the way to get there is not through anger, envy and resentment; it's by continuing to build together.

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

Mr. Peter Kormos: To the Minister of Labour: According to a major Workers' Action Centre report released just a few weeks ago, one in three low-wage workers have had wages unfairly withheld or outright stolen by bosses. One example is Lillian Namukasa, who left Uganda to make a new life in Canada as a live-in caregiver for two small children. But after working full-time for two years she was paid just \$2,100 and then fired without cause.

As the minister who says he's responsible for working conditions in this province, how can he allow something like this to happen in Ontario?

Hon. Charles Sousa: Let me be clear, and to all those who are most vulnerable in the workplace: It's this government that has taken a number of initiatives to reach out and to protect those very most vulnerable. Anyone who is out there working and is not getting paid—it's totally unacceptable. We recognize that and we encourage every effort to resolve it. That is why, since we came into power, we've doubled the number of inspectors who are out there; we've increased the number of prosecutions. When you were in power and that side was in power, over the 12 years they were there, only 97 prosecutions occurred. We've had over 1,200. As a result, we've recovered \$65 million. We'll continue to do that.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Ms. Namukasa and Ms. de Jesus think that's hokey. Vivian de Jesus is another woman. She cared for an elderly woman and her two adult children with disabilities for 10 years. For the last two years she lived with the family, working 132 hours—three times the statutory work week. Again, how on earth can this minister responsible for working conditions in this province allow these kinds of abusive employment practices to exist? He's been minister while this has been going on on his watch. These women find him irresponsible; we find him disgraceful.

Hon. Charles Sousa: It is not allowed. That's the point. That's why we're out there making investigations. That's why we're being proactive in our investigations. I should say that it was this side of the House that introduced laws to further protect those live-in caregivers, not that side.

In fact, in 2009, we introduced the Employment Protection for Foreign Nationals Act. This was to ensure that

live-in caregivers are properly protected under the law. What did we do? We included bans on all fees. We prohibited any practices such as withholding documents and we prohibited reprisals. We want to enhance education and outreach. We've introduced a number of ways to reach those most vulnerable in 23 different languages.

I say this to those who are feeling intimidated: Call the ministry. We will react. We will ensure that their issues are covered and we will do everything in our power to protect them.

LOCAL HEALTH INTEGRATION NETWORKS

Mr. Bill Mauro: My question is for the Minister of Health. Minister, last week and on several occasions, the Leader of the Opposition indicated that if their party is elected he would eliminate LHINs, or local health integration networks, and not replace them with anything. He has also implied that there's a large cost associated with the operation of the LHINs as compared with the previous system, and that by eliminating LHINs he would somehow be able to fund some of the 229 promises he has made so far as the election nears.

Can the minister please tell the House the cost associated with the work that the LHINs do, the cost associated with the work done by what the LHINs replaced and the role that the LHINs play in our health care system?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Scrapping the LHINs will take away the local knowledge, the local expertise and the local voice that have resulted in much better health care for the people of Ontario: lower wait times and better access to care. LHINs streamline health care so it works for the patients.

We know what the PC platform really means. It's a dark, pessimistic and angry plan to close hospitals, fire nurses and cut services. While they may have been distracted over the past few months on damage control related to some of their candidates, we have been focused on getting better health care in local communities.

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LHINs cost about \$70 million a year—that's about the same as the previous regional authorities that they replaced—with much better results. We now have true local health care decision-making—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Bill Mauro: Minister, in my riding of Thunder Bay—Atikokan, the North West LHIN represents local decision-making by the people of Thunder Bay and northwestern Ontario. The Leader of the Opposition wants to remove that local decision-making, take it away from Thunder Bay and bring it all back to Toronto. In other words, Toronto knows best.

He would also be responsible for the loss of a number of good jobs in my community. But again, most importantly, he would greatly reduce northerners' ability to shape their own health care delivery.

Right now in northwestern Ontario, wait times for cancer, cataract, hip and knee are some of the best in the province. But apparently the Leader of the Opposition thinks that Toronto knows better than Thunder Bay and northern Ontario.

Minister, can you tell this House what the loss of local decision-making would mean to Thunder Bay and all communities across this province?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: We have seen what happens when health care is managed out of Queen's Park: Hospitals are closed and there is no understanding of local conditions.

Alberta eliminated regional health authorities, with unfortunate results. As the Ottawa Citizen wrote, "That province lost a grip on what was good for the community."

Our government is not the only voice in support of our LHINs. In fact, Dr. Wilbert Keon, a card-carrying Conservative, said that scrapping the LHINs would be "the stupidest move" he's ever heard of, saying it would "undo years and years of progress."

I'm proud of the accomplishments of our LHINs.

The angry, the ill-thought-out plan of the Hudak PCs will take us backwards. It will bring all decision-making back to Queen's Park because they think Toronto knows best.

SEX OFFENDERS

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: My question is to the Premier as well. Our platform, Changebook, puts forward the plan for an Ontario PC government to use GPS technology to monitor registered sex offenders and other high-risk offenders. A Tim Horton PC government will protect our communities by making sex offenders wear GPS bracelets that track their whereabouts.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Minister of Health, Minister of Consumer Services, Minister of Energy, member from Eglinton—Lawrence, member from Thunder Bay—Atikokan, member from Ancaster, Minister of Community and Social Services, Minister of Health for a second time, Minister of Energy for a second time.

Please continue.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: Premier McGuinty will not. However, he will reimburse the cost of a GPS system that the chair of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board expensed while on a road trip to South Carolina.

Why has Premier McGuinty made it a priority to pay for a GPS system for bureaucrats, but not for GPS monitors to keep our community safe from registered sex offenders?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

Hon. James J. Bradley: What I am worried about is a proposal I heard to place the prisoners from our system into our neighbourhoods, our schoolyards, our business

areas, amongst our families, senior citizens and so on. I was very alarmed to hear that because I know in the province of Alberta they considered and abandoned that particular measure. They did not even proceed with it because of two things: One, they obviously saw that it's very dangerous to have individuals convicted of sex crimes, convicted of such things as violent assaults, break-and-enter, or drug peddling in our neighbourhoods, our schoolyards, our parks and so on. I'm very worried that somebody would even float this idea—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I was actually talking about GPS monitoring. Maybe you didn't get the question. Okay? Premier McGuinty has famously said that crime isn't a priority for his government, and it shows. For eight years, he had the chance to make use of technology like GPS technology or create a website of where registered sex offenders live. He didn't, he won't, and he can't.

The choice facing Ontario families this October is very simple: the McGuinty government saying that crime is not a priority to keep communities safe from registered sex offenders, or an Ontario PC government that protects families who work hard and play by the rules from those who don't.

How did you get so out of touch with the priorities of Ontario families? Why don't you listen to member Jim Brownell? He'll straighten you out on these answers.

Hon. James J. Bradley: Speaking of making crime a priority, this government has put 2,300 more police officers on Ontario streets. It has invested nearly \$90 million in 30 new OPP detachments, communication centres and forensic identification centres, mainly in rural and northern parts of the province. It has established a first-of-its-kind \$51-million guns and gangs strategy. It has invested \$20 million to date in the highly successful Toronto anti-violence intervention strategy, invested \$6 million to date in the provincial anti-violence intervention strategy and recently announced an additional \$16 million in funding over the next two years. We have increased the budget of the Ontario Provincial Police by more than 50%, and since 2003 we have seen a consistent decline in crime—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

CYCLING POLICIES

Mr. Rosario Marchese: My question is to the Minister of Transportation. Today marks the launch of Bike Month in Toronto. The minister knows that we badly need a provincial bike policy to fund cycling infrastructure, promote bicycle tourism and promote safe cycling. Last fall, you said the government would release a cycling policy in a few months. We only have a few months before the writ is dropped. When can we expect a bike policy?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I'm very happy to answer this very friendly question from the member opposite. I

was thrilled over the weekend to be in the Warton-Tobermory area, where there was a community ride to celebrate the paved shoulders on Highway 6 that we were able to complete. I joined Eleanor McMahon and Adam Belanger, who were organizing the ride with members of the community across the age range. I rode beside a 6-year-old boy, and we had people much, much older riding on the shoulders of the road that had been paved, with the signs by the side of the road saying, "share the road."

That's what we envision for the province: On secondary highways where tourism and economic development and safety work together, we can have a network of paved shoulders and municipal bike paths that will allow people to cycle safely around the province of—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I know you enjoy riding the bike; I understand that. But I was asking where your bike policy is, and you didn't comment on that. You know that Ontario has not updated its cycling policy since 1992. You also know that Quebec has a 4,000-kilometre province-wide bike network. You know that. You also know that the president of the Association of Local Public Health Agencies urged you to develop and permanently fund a provincial policy on cycling infrastructure, stating that this would have a substantial impact on the health and well-being of Ontarians.

When will Ontario finally release an adequately funded Ontario bicycle policy?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I'm very happy to tell the member opposite that we are in the process of reviewing that cycling policy, which hasn't been reviewed since 1992. As I said, we paved the shoulders on Highway 6, and I'm looking forward, in the very near future, to announcing other roads that we are going to be able to extend the shoulders of, because we know that there are many roads around the province.

We're looking at other jurisdictions. Quebec has got a route verte across the province. We'd like to have a similar network of cycle paths across the province. We've worked with municipalities. The transportation demand management program has put \$750,000 into municipal infrastructure for active transportation.

I'm very, very much looking forward to being able to release a new cycling policy in this province. Active transportation is a part of what we must do.

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RENEWABLE ENERGY

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: My question is for the Minister of Energy. Building a strong, globally competitive clean energy economy is a critically important part of Ontario's economic future overall. We do live in the 21st century, after all. Recently, Ernst and Young released a report indicating that new investment in clean energy globally reached \$243 billion in 2010 alone, a massive 30% growth rate.

I feel that the PC Party's determination that Ontario should have no part of a quarter-trillion-dollar global market that grew 30% last year is backwards, narrow-minded and economically reckless.

I think the minister owes Ontarians some assurances that job-creating investment in Ontario's clean energy economy remains robust and that we're open for—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Minister?

Hon. Brad Duguid: I think the member is absolutely right: It makes no sense to close Ontario down to one of the most cutting-edge and fastest-growing industries in the entire world, but nonetheless, that's exactly what the Leader of the Opposition is proposing to do.

It's a reckless plan. It puts thousands of jobs at risk. It puts thousands of livelihoods at risk. It kills hope and opportunity for thousands of Ontarians, many of whom have been lining up on weekends and even in the rain to seek jobs in our clean energy economy in communities right across this province.

I was in LaSalle just last week welcoming Uni-Solar to Ontario. They're investing \$12 billion to refurbish an old manufacturing plant. They're employing 80 people, creating jobs that will be in place by August. They're excited by what we're building here in Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: I can tell you that in southwestern Ontario, workers and investors alike are taking the Leader of the Opposition's threat to their livelihood extremely seriously, and they frankly feel betrayed.

In my riding, Steve Bilodeau, who runs GSL Group in Wallaceburg, says that he stands to lose up to \$4 million as a result of the uncertainty that the PC Party has cast over the clean energy economy.

Destroying that economy does nothing but put thousands of Ontarians out of work and threatens Ontario's reputation on the international stage. The ripple effect that this will have on future international investment cannot be ignored. Can the minister commit to Mr. Bilodeau and his workers in Wallaceburg that he will stand up and fight for their future and the future of thousands like them in Ontario?

Hon. Brad Duguid: Absolutely. Of course we're going to fight for their future and the future of the thousands of Ontarians who are benefiting from our clean energy policy.

I want to tell the member that she can pass along to Mr. Bilodeau and his workers that this party is the only party in this province that's standing up for the creation of those jobs, that's standing up to ensure that we build a vibrant clean energy economy here in this province.

I can understand why the workers and investors in that plant feel very concerned about the irresponsible comments and the reckless promises of the Leader of the Opposition. I've had investors say to me that going down that PC path would make Ontario an absolute international laughingstock. We're not going to allow that to happen. We're going to stand up for the investments

being made in this province. We're going to stand up for our clean energy—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

SKILLED TRADES

Mr. Randy Hillier: My question is to the Premier. In 2010, the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities used time allocation to ram through legislation to create the Ontario College of Trades, which limits and restricts skilled tradesmen. Tradespeople must now be a member of the college of trades, despite the fact that they had no opportunity to vote on it. Now we hear from your ministry that the college of trades will levy a work tax of \$125 per person per year on all our half-million tradespeople and \$1,000 on each employer.

Will the Premier confirm to this House that his college of trades will be collecting over \$50 million in new work taxes from tradespeople and employers across Ontario?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I'm pleased to take the question. What I can say is that we're very proud of the fact that we have a new college of trades in the province of Ontario. We're working hard in Ontario to elevate the status of our trades. We think it's important that they have their own college that helps to regulate their activities and establish standards. For a long time, teachers have had that privilege and responsibility; so have doctors, lawyers, accountants, engineers, architects, nurses and the like. What we've done now is we've elevated the status of our trades to ensure that, as young people and parents in particular consider their options in the future, we want them to more and more consider opportunities to be found in the trades here in Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Randy Hillier: I take it from the answer that we've just uncovered a new secret tax grab from this McGuinty government. But how can this Premier have the gall to tax these tradesmen but also have the gall to bring in this college of trades, denying them a vote? This new \$50-million tax grab is nothing more than an insult of Liberal arrogance.

We already know about your waste at the WSIB. Now your friend Patrick Dillon of the Working Families Coalition sits atop the patronage trough at the college of trades, the highest at the appointments council. Premier, are you imposing this reckless and secret new \$50-million tax because you don't care about workers, or because you're quarterbacked by your friend Pat Dillon, or both?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: If never really takes us that long to get to the core. It is anger, it is resentment, it is negativity, it is pessimism. It's never that far below the surface in that party, and that's kind of a sad commentary.

I want to say to my honourable colleague that this new college of trades has the same responsibilities and the same privileges as do other colleges—again, whether those are nurses, doctors, lawyers, accountants or engin-

ees—so they can establish criteria to determine, for example, their membership. They can and will establish criteria to determine fees that are—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The honourable member from Lanark understands the standing orders. You asked the question; I would ask that you give the Premier the courtesy of giving the answer. If you're not satisfied with the answer, you can file a late show.

Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I was saying that this particular college, like all the other colleges, has the responsibility to, in fact, determine the criteria for its membership. If there are going to be membership fees, they decide on that as well.

What I can report is that no such decisions have been made by the college to this point in time. When they do make that decision, I'm sure my honourable colleague will respect that.

CHILD CARE CENTRES

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Premier. An Ontario Municipal Social Services Association study released this month paints a dire picture of the challenges faced by licensed child care providers in rural and northern communities. In the past two years alone, 52 rural and northern child care centres have closed, and 200 licensed child care centres are at immediate risk of closing. According to the report, "The combination of a declining population, insufficient funding, and the more recent introduction of the full-day early learning ... has put stress on the licensed child care systems in these areas."

My question is: Why are the McGuinty Liberals standing by while families in rural and northern communities are losing their child care centres?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Education.

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: Our government has been very aware, first of all, of the importance of child care services in the province of Ontario. That is why our government moved to provide \$63.5 million to sustain child care in Ontario when the federal government abandoned them. I would say to the honourable member that I would really encourage her to contact her federal colleagues and make sure that they make the point that Ontario families are paying the bill that the federal government should be paying here in Ontario. Because we did that, we were able to ensure that 8,500 child care spaces were maintained, that 1,000 child care workers kept their jobs in the province of Ontario and that thousands of families continue to enjoy—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: This minister knows very well that the all-day learning program the Liberal government brought is directly responsible for these centres being at risk. That is absolutely the case—their own policy.

As the report states—and this is the municipal services—

Interjections.

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The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock. The members from Don Valley East and Thunder Bay—Atikokan. The Minister of Agriculture and Food.

Please continue.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: As the report very clearly states, "Quality, licensed child care benefits children developmentally and physically." It is simply not right that families in rural and northern communities are left without access to child care centres.

When will the McGuinty Liberals recognize the unique challenges that children and families in northern and rural communities face and make sure that they put the funding in place to help them with the younger children that they now take care of because the older kids are in all-day learning?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: I'm very concerned; it certainly sounds like the NDP do not support full-day kindergarten for families. We know that full-day kindergarten will save families \$6,000 per year per child. What I can also say—and I know that I've given this response to the NDP in the House before—is that we've recognized that there is an impact of full-day kindergarten. That is why our government is implementing \$51 million in transition funding. By the way, that's funding that the NDP voted against. We're also providing \$12 million over the next five years to child care facilities to enable them to refit and retool their operations for their new, younger clients. So that's \$51 million for transition funding. That's \$12 million over five years—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Mr. Dave Levac: My question is for the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Minister, residents of my community continue to be concerned about the safety of their streets. I've worked with the police, the police chief, the police services board, city hall and citizens alike, and they do a pretty good job locally of making that happen. They want to know, though, that their government is making the necessary investments to get tough on crime and get tough on the causes of crime.

I understand that the McGuinty government has made a number of significant investments to strengthen our police services across Ontario. I note that these are investments that target particular concerns of my constituents such as guns and gangs, sexual exploitation of children, and human trafficking, to name just a few.

Can the minister tell me what investment this government has made in community safety and getting the results that we need? What have we achieved?

Hon. James J. Bradley: Well, we are using taxpayers' dollars, first of all, to track down violent criminals, to prosecute them and to put them behind steel bars

and high walls where they belong. We have put 2,300 new police officers on Ontario streets, including 200 more OPP. We've invested millions in fights against dangerous sex offenders who prey on children on the Internet.

Two weeks ago, I had the pleasure of joining my colleagues in Belleville and Guelph to announce expansion of the guns and gangs strategy to those communities. Since 2005, we've invested tens of millions of dollars across the province to step up the fight against dangerous guns and gangs, and the results have been remarkable: hundreds of gangsters off the street, thousands of firearms and other weapons recovered—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Dave Levac: Minister, I appreciate that, and I know community leaders do. But I think that leads me to an important question I have to ask you. I can tell the minister that my constituents do feel a greater sense of security knowing that these offenders, many of whom are convicted violent offenders who prey on children and women, are behind bars in secured facilities like the one in my city. They are overseen by hard-working, dedicated correctional officers.

In this regard, my constituents were shocked to learn last week that the Leader of the Opposition is planning to ship thousands of inmates to our parks and our neighbourhoods—every day, 40 hours a week, among our neighbours, our friends and our children—to rake leaves and cut grass on roads and in neighbourhood parks. They are shocked. They say it's ill conceived, and they say it's ill advised. They say it's fraught with the many risks that are out there from these very people—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Minister?

Hon. James J. Bradley: Well, first of all, there's a significant difference between what is proposed over there and what we are doing. We are putting 2,300 more police officers on the streets. In other words, we want to put police officers in our neighbourhoods, in our schoolyards and in our business areas throughout the province. The Conservatives want to put more prisoners on the streets, in the neighbourhoods, in the parks and everywhere else in this province.

I can't believe that. It reminds me of the movie *Cool Hand Luke*, where the sheriff says, "Clearly what we have here is a failure to communicate." Well, clearly what we have here is a failure to think this policy through properly. I simply cannot believe they've come up with this bizarre scheme, which the province of Alberta said no to—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Mr. Toby Barrett: To the Minister of the Environment: Minister, last month I asked you about the Edwards landfill in Cayuga regarding a series of provincial orders requiring 37 items to be complied with by May 20.

These orders follow years of questions and petitions and process due to concerns about the ongoing operation of the landfill and its impact on the local environment.

Haldimand Against Landfill Transfers, HALT, has worked to protect the landfill's surrounding area for close to a decade. They wrote you requesting that the site be closed until the 37 items are complied with. You didn't close the site. The May 20 deadline has now passed. Can you tell the House and can you confirm that all 37 items have now been complied with?

Hon. John Wilkinson: I'm so happy that my critic for the environment has asked me a question today after the release of strange book on the weekend. They have a plan over there that says, "You know what we need to do with landfills? Take all that stuff that we've been safely diverting away from landfills and dump it into landfills." Now he comes into the House today and says, "Well, our party is for getting paint and tires and waste electronics and what we should do is put them in the landfills."

On this side of the House, we believe that people want to do the right thing. They want to divert. We want to take those dangerous items that can endanger our children and our ground water and get them out of landfills so we don't have the type of compliance issues that we have in Cayuga.

I say to the member that our ministry is here to protect the people in his community, that we will do whatever we need to do to ensure that the laws of the province of Ontario are respected. But we are absolutely adamant that we are keeping harmful—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Toby Barrett: Back to Edwards: These are significant issues with asbestos and leachate spill contingencies. Local residents were already skeptical, given your history of reckless ineptitude on waste diversion and waste management. Now we hear that Terrasan has filed for bankruptcy, ending speculation that they would purchase Edwards out of receivership. People are asking me now where the money will come from to ensure the upgrades are completed.

Minister, what assurances can you provide the people in Haldimand county that Edwards won't revert back to the pre-February 10, 2011, status before your environmental orders were issued?

Hon. John Wilkinson: Ever since the weekend, everybody has been asking me, "Why do they have a plan over there to take hazardous, dangerous material and dump it back in the landfills?" That's why we have the problem in the first place. On this side of the House, we are committed to protecting the environment. People want to do the right thing, and that is exactly why we have worked to upload that responsibility from our municipalities. What did we get on the weekend? That they want to download waste back to the municipalities. When was the last time we had a government downloading to municipalities? It was that government over there.

We have been working in partnership with our communities like Cayuga to make sure that people are protected. They don't want to see this leachate. They don't

want to see tires in the back forty and in the ditches. All of those materials today—we have the hope of having them transformed into new resources and into new jobs. All of those green jobs in recycling are going to be—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

PROMOTION DE LA SANTÉ

HEALTH PROMOTION

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est pour la ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée.

Interjection.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Elle est presque prête.

Le quatrième Colloque international des programmes locaux et régionaux de santé se tiendra dans la région d'Ottawa du 27 au 30 juin. Ce colloque s'inscrit dans un mouvement international d'éducation et de promotion de la santé, et, comme son nom l'indique, il donne la parole aux artisans du changement.

Comment expliquez-vous que les gouvernements de tous les niveaux au Canada et à l'étranger s'impliquent dans ce colloque sauf l'Ontario, qui brille par son absence?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Merci pour la question. I will do my best to respond. I am more than happy to look into the details of this particular question. As you can imagine, we get requests for funding for many, many conferences, and frankly, we are doing everything we can to put all of the money possible into front-line care.

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I will look into this particular situation.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

M^{me} France Gélinas: Je veux souligner que le colloque sera l'occasion de souligner 25 ans de la Charte d'Ottawa pour la promotion de la santé. Il sera l'occasion de rendre compte de l'action des réseaux francophones en santé en situation linguistique minoritaire. Les francophones de l'Ontario ont répondu à l'appel en masse. Nous serons la plus grosse délégation au colloque. Le gouvernement fédéral, les autres gouvernements provinciaux et des pays d'Europe ont tous répondu à l'appel. Comment est-ce qu'on peut expliquer l'absence du gouvernement ontarien à un colloque de cette importance, coprésidé par des Ontariens et qui se tient en territoire ontarien?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Merci encore. Again, I will look into this particular conference and have a better understanding of why it was, if, in fact, that is the case.

ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE DISABLED

Mr. Reza Moridi: My question is for the Minister of Community and Social Services. About one in seven people in Ontario has a disability, and it is anticipated to grow to one in five within 20 years due to our aging population. By 2036, the number of seniors is projected to be more than double the 2009 number of 4.7 million.

This week is accessibility week, and it gives us all an opportunity to rededicate ourselves to building an access-

ible Ontario for people with all kinds of disabilities. To the minister: How is this government addressing accessibility to make Ontario fully inclusive?

L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Je voudrais remercier le député pour cette question.

Each May we recognize National Access Awareness Week to honour achievements in building an accessible Ontario for people with all kinds of disabilities. Under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act our government is creating standards to break down barriers for people with disabilities, obstacles that stand in the way of them and opportunity.

I want to recognize the many people who could see beyond the hard work to the opportunity in our accessibility plan: knowledgeable, industrious and dedicated Ontarians who gave their time to serve on the standards development committee and my advisory committee. They are helping us to turn accessibility from an inspiring concept into an achievable reality.

This legislation—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Reza Moridi: I know that we all benefit from the work Ontarians are doing to make our communities fully accessible. I appreciate the advice I received from the accessibility advisory councils in my riding of Richmond Hill. They inform me of the accessibility needs in my community now and provide feedback on how our government can help. I understand that time is needed for businesses to adapt to new accessibility standards as they are developed and implemented. However, some are still concerned that there is a cost associated with becoming accessible.

To the minister: What are the economic benefits for businesses that provide accessible services?

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Ontario's businesses have told us that accessibility is the right thing to do, but we also say it is the smart thing to do. The world-renowned Martin Prosperity Institute predicts that improving accessibility could bring Ontario up to \$1.6 billion in tourism. Retail sales could grow by another \$10 billion. Whether it's a parent of a child, a colleague or a neighbour, I am willing to suggest that everyone in this House knows someone who has a disability. Congratulations to them and to all members of the House for helping us build an Ontario full of opportunity.

CORRECTION OF RECORD

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: When I introduced Brian Smith, I misspoke when I mentioned the name of the organization that he leads. I called it Greenwood; it should have been WoodGreen. I apologize.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. That is a point of order.

There being no deferred votes, this House stands recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1145 to 1300.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Jim Brownell: I'd like to introduce Peter and Rita Mayer from the riding of Mississauga-Erindale, who are the parents of my executive assistant, Amanda Mayer.

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette: I'd like all to join me in welcoming a good and close friend of mine, Mr. Bob Holden, a retired CAW worker.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd like all members to join me in welcoming today to the Speaker's gallery Mr. Steven Marshall, MP from the Parliament of South Australia. Welcome to Queen's Park.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

RETURNS FOR LEUKEMIA

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I'm pleased to stand today. Over the weekend, across the country, the Beer Store promoted the Returns For Leukemia fundraiser. I took part for a while yesterday afternoon at the Atherly Road Beer Store in Orillia. I want to thank a number of people: Hilary Loba, Dan Loba, Ben Teeter, Randy Scott, Steve Gatcke and Jeanette Conway, who are all members of UFCW Local 12R24.

The Beer Store, of course, is made up of companies like Molson, Labatt, Sleeman, Moosehead and Brick. More importantly, this is an important fundraiser. I think that yesterday alone in the Beer Store in Orillia, \$2,500 in empty beer bottles was brought back. That money all went to the leukemia foundation. We don't have the statistics from yesterday, but last year across our country, over \$1 million was raised for leukemia research, and I think that's an amazing thing.

It was amazing to be there and watch how many people had actually collected their bottles to bring them back on that one particular day. Of course, now they can bring their wine bottles back as well.

I think it's great, and I just wanted to thank the Beer Store organization for a great fundraiser. It's growing each and every year. I encourage all MPPs and MPs across our province and country to take part. It's a great community fundraiser, and I appreciated being part of it as well.

HAMMER HEADS PROGRAM

Mrs. Laura Albanese: I am very pleased to rise in the House today to talk about the importance of providing youth employment opportunities for at-risk youth from priority neighbourhoods around the province of Ontario.

Recently I had the opportunity to meet with representatives from the Hammer Heads program, which plays a vital role in my riding of York South-Weston by providing youth training opportunities.

The program works in collaboration with all the affiliates of the Central Ontario Building Trades. The focus of the program is to prepare the participants, based on the current needs of the construction industry. By giving youth hands-on training in multiple trades, Hammer Heads tries to find the best career fit for each individual participant. Programs such as these can help create careers that are life-changing, with long-term jobs. I want to take this opportunity to thank the staff at the Hammer Heads program for their hard work and dedication.

To ensure their success, it is vital that we continue to encourage employers around the province to give back to their communities by providing employment opportunities for youth. With continued support, these types of initiatives will help brighten the future for at-risk youth in my riding of York South-Weston and throughout the province of Ontario.

PARAMEDIC SERVICES

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I'm pleased to rise today to recognize the Dufferin EMS on their remarkable score following their inspection by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. I'm proud to say that the Dufferin EMS ranked as one of the top ambulance services in Ontario. Comments from their inspection included: "flawless" personnel records; the vehicle maintenance records are "the best we've ever seen"; and they are "flawlessly meeting the service plan."

In fact, they were told that the review of the Dufferin EMS was the best ever handed out by the ministry inspector, who has done more than 400 of these inspections. He even went so far as to say that the Dufferin EMS was "a real diamond."

The Dufferin EMS was reviewed on how well their staff performed, response times, overall patient care, vehicle maintenance, policies and procedures, attention to detail and working relationships. The ambulance stations in Orangeville, Grand Valley and Shelburne were also inspected, and a team of inspectors rode along with the paramedics for two days.

Director Tom Reid, Paul DePrince and the whole team at the Dufferin EMS are to be commended for their outstanding dedication to ensuring that ambulance services for the residents of the county of Dufferin meet top safety, maintenance and patient care requirements. Your commitment to exceptional service is to be recognized and applauded.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

Mr. Dave Levac: Today, all of us are wearing carnations to signify a visit by very special people in the House. The Muscular Sclerosis Society, or MS Society, is talking to all our members in the House today, with some issues they are bringing for us in the House to debate, to discuss. We want to say thank you to them, first and foremost for being here, and for providing us

with the information that they find is an important part of the continued battle that individuals are faced with in terms of MS every single day.

To the caregivers, the loved ones, the staff and all the volunteers who give of their time, their energy and their love to provide for people with MS, we want to thank you out loud. We want to thank you for bringing us your issues. We want to thank you for providing us with some direction and some suggestions and recommendations that the government of the day—or any day—could recommend and seriously take into consideration to provide for their needs, so that topics that were raised would be passed on to those who are responsible for providing the services at the government level.

Again, it's important for us to acknowledge that they have been speaking, and what I found extremely impressive is that they weren't speaking specifically only about MS. They were talking about all the people who are faced with these challenges in day-to-day life. So on behalf of all of us, I offer our deep gratitude to all the visitors who have come here today to provide us with those issues dealing with MS.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

Mrs. Christine Elliott: I'm also proud and honoured to rise today in support of MS Awareness Month and the MS Carnation Campaign. I thank all members who have shown their dedication to people affected by MS by wearing a carnation today. Today, volunteers from the MS Society are at Queen's Park meeting with MPPs from each political party to raise awareness about muscular sclerosis.

Research shows that women are three times more likely to be diagnosed with MS than men. Many Canadians living with muscular sclerosis are mothers, and more young people and children are being affected by this disease every day. That's why the MS Carnation Campaign takes place over Mother's Day weekend.

For over 60 years, the Muscular Sclerosis Society of Canada has provided hope and help for people with MS across Canada: hope through their extensive national research campaign, and help through services that make life better for people suffering with MS and their families today. Please join the MS Society in making every day better for people living with MS and in working toward the day when we finally eradicate MS.

MELANOMA

Mr. Khalil Ramal: Today I had the pleasure of attending, along with many of my colleagues, the Melanoma Day breakfast held here at Queen's Park. It was an opportunity to meet the leaders who are at the forefront of the fight against skin cancer. We were joined at the breakfast by people like Annette Cyr, chair of the Melanoma Network of Canada, who is not only an advocate for skin cancer prevention but also a two-time survivor of melanoma.

Ontario has the highest rate of melanoma in Canada. One of the 10 most frequent forms of cancer, melanoma affects one in every 74 people, but if caught early, it can be treatable. The key is knowing the symptoms and signs of melanoma. In addition to early detection, prevention is also extremely important, and educating people about this bad disease.

1310

Last year, I co-sponsored a bill with MPP France Gélinas that would help reduce the incidence of melanoma through prevention. Bill 31, the Skin Cancer Prevention Act, called for regulation of tanning bed usage, including a prohibition on the usage of tanning beds by people under the age of 19. Many organizations expressed their support for the bill and hopefully, before we end the session, the bill will pass and become law in the province of Ontario, because it means a lot to many people across the province; also, to protect many youths and young people from getting melanoma cancer.

Today we're here to support the melanoma organization, which is working very hard on behalf of all of us in the province of Ontario to protect the youth and the people of this province.

HEALTH PROMOTION

M^{me} France Gélinas: On behalf of New Democrats, the creators of medicare, we believe that the second stage of medicare needs to be rolled out. What do we mean? We mean keeping people well, promoting health and preventing diseases.

Today, I, as did many of my colleagues, had the pleasure to meet with the Melanoma Network of Canada, and we all agree: We can prevent people from developing skin cancer and melanoma, a type of skin cancer, which could save us up to \$1 billion in health care costs alone, not to mention the human costs of developing skin cancer.

I, with the member from London-Fanshawe, co-sponsored Bill 31, a private members' bill that would ban the use of artificial tanning beds for youth under the age of 18 and would regulate the industry in order to prevent skin cancer in our youth. This is the second time that I have introduced such a bill. The first time, it died after second reading on the order paper, and it looks like the bill will die again this time.

More and more scientific reports link artificial tanning beds with increased health risks, but we see a health promotion minister, in charge to protect our youth from cancer exposure, who is missing in action. This is really unfortunate.

FARMERS' MARKETS

Mr. Bob Delaney: Today, Foodland Ontario hosts its celebration of local foods: the fifth annual outdoor farmers' market at the Ontario Legislature. On behalf of members and staff alike, I'd like to thank everyone who helped plan and deliver today's event.

Farmers' markets in Ontario are booming. Families take pride in choosing fresh, high-quality farm products directly from the producer during the growing season. It's a weekend outing and a community hub for city and farm folks alike, where some city cash gets exchanged for fresh local food, baked goods, flowers, jams and many more farm products.

The province and Ontario farmers want to continue and expand this retail trade. Ontario has invested \$80 million to support such initiatives as Foodland Ontario and the Ontario farmers' market strategy.

Farmers' markets across Ontario have grown to almost 200 in number, with estimated sales of \$641 million last year. Farmers' markets added more than 300 additional shopping days last year alone. This helps Ontario farms thrive, puts local Ontario food on the table in places like Mississauga and in neighbourhoods like my own neighbourhoods in Mississauga—Meadowvale, Streetsville and Lisgar—and it entices both mainstream and new Canadians to shop local and cook local, this year and every year.

UNITED JEWISH APPEAL

Mr. Mike Colle: Yesterday, I joined with about 10,000 residents of the greater Toronto area in the 44th annual United Jewish Appeal Walk With Israel. The United Jewish Appeal raises hundreds of thousands of dollars every year to ensure that people who don't have supports get that support, whether it be children or the elderly in our community. It also raises money for projects in Israel, like the Bat Yam program, which is a school that helps new immigrant children outside of Tel Aviv with their education. I know there are many Canadians who volunteer at that school, and last year at this time, myself, Monte Kwinter, the member from Willowdale and Minister Hoskins were able to visit this school.

Anyway, it was an incredible day—10,000 children and grandparents walking. There was one gentleman who has walked all 44 years on this great walk. They raised money for important community causes that help people in need in the Jewish community.

I want to thank all the organizers of this walk and all the participants, especially many of my residents of Eglinton—Lawrence who were on it. I say mazel tov to all of you who participated. It was a wonderful community event right down at Coronation Park.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. Norman W. Sterling: I beg leave to present a report on the Municipal Property Assessment Corp. from

the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Mr. Sterling presents the committee's report and moves the adoption of its recommendations. Does the Chair wish to make a brief statement?

Mr. Norman W. Sterling: The Auditor General reviewed MPAC, or the Municipal Property Assessment Corp., in his 2010 auditor's report. Perhaps the most outstanding fact that he brought forward was that he found that in one in eight cases, the Municipal Property Assessment Corp. assessment of value of people's homes was out by at least 20%, which is a significant variance for an individual property owner. The municipalities would be less concerned about that than the individual who is being over-assessed because there would be ups and downs; some people would be over-assessed by 20% and some would be under-assessed by 20%. Basically, it would be a wash for the municipality in terms of the revenue they receive. However, the homeowner who is hit with the 20% extra would, in effect, be subsidizing those who were under-assessed by 20%.

So the major recommendation of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts was to ask MPAC to report to the committee on when and how it will investigate this particular problem and, where warranted, adjust the property assessments accordingly. In other words, the public accounts committee wants MPAC to address this issue and they want a report to the public accounts committee on how it's going to do this and when it's going to do this.

With that major recommendation, I would adjourn the debate.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Mr. Sterling has moved adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Debate adjourned.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. Norman W. Sterling: I beg leave to present a Report on the Family Responsibility Office from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Mr. Sterling presents the committee's report and moves the adoption of its recommendations. Does the Chair wish to make a brief statement?

Mr. Norman W. Sterling: The Family Responsibility Office has, over a long period of time, encountered great difficulty in doing its job; that is, collecting money for single parents, mostly women, for the care of the children—and the care of a former spouse, as well.

The committee makes 16 recommendations with regard to the Family Responsibility Office.

In over 80% of the cases, when people are phoning in to the Family Responsibility Office, they're not even getting a voice mail response.

This office has had a great deal of difficulties, over the Liberal government from 1987, when it was first set up, to the New Democratic government, to the Conservative government and now to the present Liberal government.

This is the first time in history that the public accounts committee has made a recommendation to try to deal with this issue in the future. The auditor has reviewed the Family Responsibility Office on three occasions: once, about 1995-96; the public accounts committee dealt with it then. As well, in 2003 and 2004 the public accounts committee dealt with the Family Responsibility Office, and they made recommendations back in 2004. I was the chairman at that particular time, because I have been the chairman of the committee since that time. In fact, Ms. Sandals and Mr. Zimmer, who were also on the committee in 2004, are still on that committee and have served the committee very well. But they, as well as myself and other members of the committee said, "You can make recommendations and you can follow up those recommendations all you like, but the system doesn't seem to be working."

1320

So the committee has made what I would call a historic recommendation. I'm going to read the recommendation in total: "In 2010 the auditor completed his third value-for-money audit of FRO—the Family Responsibility Office—"since it was established as the support and custody orders enforcement program in 1987 and concluded that FRO was still not successfully fulfilling its mandate of collecting unpaid child and spousal support payments. Accordingly, the Standing Committee on Public Accounts attaches importance to a future review of the office. The standing committee therefore recommends that early in the next Parliament, the Ministry of Community and Social Services request that a government motion be introduced to establish a select committee under standing order 112(a) to undertake a comprehensive and comparative review of the Family Responsibility Office."

We can make recommendations. The auditor can continue to examine and audit the Family Responsibility Office, but all members of the committee feel that it's broken and it has to be fixed. Therefore we are making this recommendation that in the next Parliament there be a select committee set up of all members of the Legislature—because we all learn about that very much from our constituency offices—and that we look at a new model looking at other jurisdictions.

With that, I will adjourn the debate on this report.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Mr. Sterling has moved adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Debate adjourned.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. Norman W. Sterling: I beg leave to present a Report on Non-Hazardous Waste Disposal and Diversion

from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Mr. Sterling presents the committee's report and moves the adoption of its recommendations. Does the Chair wish to make a brief statement?

Mr. Norman W. Sterling: This particular report comes from the auditor's report of last December, that is, December 2010. The auditor noted that in 2004 the government of Ontario set a goal to divert 60% of Ontario's waste from landfills by the end of 2008. But the combined residential and ICI waste—industrial, commercial and institutional waste—is only at about 24%, not 60%. The overall diversion rate for residential waste has risen to about 40% while the ICI sector rate is only at about 12%.

We, the public accounts committee, have put forward many, many recommendations with regard to this particular function of government. There is a Waste Diversion Act in place which was last amended in 2002. The main recommendation of the committee is to ask the ministry to provide the future committee of the public accounts with any information, including any proposed regulatory or legislative changes. In other words, in this particular area there is a feeling by the committee that reform is necessary as well.

With that, I would adjourn the debate.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Mr. Sterling has moved the adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Debate adjourned.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. Norman W. Sterling: I beg leave to present the Report on Public Accounts Committee Best Practice: Assistive Devices Program from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Mr. Sterling presents the committee's report. Does the Chair wish to make a brief statement?

Mr. Dave Levac: Oh, he does.

Mr. Norman W. Sterling: The member for Brant says, "He sure does."

This is the second report from the public accounts committee on best practices. This was a practice—in other words, presenting reports on best practices of the committee—that was first initiated by our committee in the past year or so. It's the committee's intent that the best practices be reviewed by the next public accounts committee. They would then not be starting from zero when they undertook their deliberations in the next Parliament as we go forward. I believe we're the only public accounts committee in Canada and perhaps internationally—I'm not certain of that—that actually is trying to journal or log its best practices for the use of a future public accounts committee in this Parliament.

This particular follow-up recommendation is about the assistive devices program. As I mentioned when I presented the report on the assistive devices program in the past few weeks, the committee felt that there was something wrong with how the management of this program was taking place. We had a hearing in March and, instead of preparing our report at that time, my committee instructed me to write a letter to the deputy minister and ask him to again appear in front of the committee, with any changes or reviews of the program that he might have. We were not satisfied with the answers that he had provided to the Auditor General in response to his report as to how they were addressing the great over-expenditures in the assistive devices program. The deputy came again to the committee in November, and by the time the deputy minister appeared in November, he had already made changes to the program which had effected savings of some \$7 million already.

We believe that the whole notion of corresponding with the deputy minister or the director or whoever is responsible for the program and then inviting them back to the committee after the first hearing has worked in this case and has really led to significant changes in the program. So we recommend that this practice be considered by public accounts committees as we go forward. With that, I would conclude my remarks.

Report presented.

Mr. Norman W. Sterling: I want to, at this moment, thank the members of the public accounts committee, who work hard every Wednesday in this Legislature—have worked hard. Particularly, as I mentioned before, I'd like to recognize Mrs. Sandals, Ms. Gélinas, Mr. Ouellette and Mr. Arnott, who are present in the Legislature, who have worked on my committee, and Mr. Arthurs as well. Ms. Sandals has been there from the first, as well as Mr. Zimmer, and I would really like to recognize her diligence and preparation in coming before that committee, because all members of the committee had to read significant reports and have to understand the issues. Over the last eight years that I've chaired the committee, I must say that it has been absolutely a pleasure for me to have Ms. Sandals there on the committee because she knows about what she talks with regard to these matters. She has worked very, very hard.

As well, Ms. Gélinas, who is a newer member to the committee—I think she has been with us for a couple of years now, and that's "new," particularly when I talk about legislative experiences, having been around for ages and ages, I think since Queen Victoria. She has worked very hard on the committee as well.

The preparation that members of the PAC committee put in is significant, but the work and the results that they have attained have been significant as well.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): To you, Mr. Chair, thank you for your efforts and all the committee's efforts. It has been a pleasure to see how the public accounts committee has worked. If only every committee in this

Legislature could operate in the same manner, things might be much different.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I beg the indulgence of the House to allow the member from Eglinton—Lawrence to introduce some guests who have just arrived.

Mr. Mike Colle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the indulgence. We have a group that came here to the Legislature to hear member Sterling speak. They came all the way from the region of Lazio in Italy, and they are the Sindacato Pensionati Italiani. In English, that is the Italian pensioners' union. Benvenuti a tutti to Ontario and to Canada. Welcome.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Welcome to Queen's Park today.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES AMENDMENT ACT

(RENT INCREASES), 2011

LOI DE 2011 MODIFIANT

LA LOI DE 2006 SUR LA LOCATION

À USAGE D'HABITATION

(AUGMENTATIONS DE LOYER)

Mr. Sterling moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 204, An Act to amend the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 with respect to the exemption from rules relating to rent increases / *Projet de loi 204, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2006 sur la location à usage d'habitation en ce qui concerne la dispense d'application des règles relatives aux augmentations de loyer.*

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member for a short statement.

Mr. Norman W. Sterling: In 1991, the NDP government passed a bill which exempted any residence that was occupied after November 1991 from rent control at all. Therefore, any increase by a landlord to a tenant is legal.

I only became aware of this last week when a constituent came in and said that they had suffered a 25% increase in their rent.

The original intent of this particular section was to encourage building, at that particular time, of rental units. I believe that this exemption is no longer needed, that there is a high enough vacancy rate, and that tenants who occupy units that were built after 1991 deserve the same protection as tenants who live in older buildings constructed prior to 1991.

MOTIONS

HOUSE SITTINGS

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I move that pursuant to standing order 6(c)(ii), the House shall meet from 6:45 to 12 midnight on Monday, May 30, 2011.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Ms. Smith has moved government notice of motion number 70. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1334 to 1339.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): All those in favour will rise one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

Ayes

Aggelonitis, Sophia
Albanese, Laura
Arthurs, Wayne
Bartolucci, Rick
Bentley, Christopher
Best, Margaret
Bradley, James J.
Brown, Michael A.
Brownell, Jim
Caplan, David
Chan, Michael
Chiarelli, Bob
Colle, Mike
Delaney, Bob
Dhillon, Vic

Dickson, Joe
Gerretsen, John
Hoskins, Eric
Hoy, Pat
Jaczek, Helena
Jeffrey, Linda
Johnson, Rick
Kular, Kuldip
Lalonde, Jean-Marc
Leal, Jeff
Levac, Dave
Mangat, Amrit
Matthews, Deborah
Mauro, Bill
McMeekin, Ted

McNeely, Phil
Meilleur, Madeleine
Moridi, Reza
Naqvi, Yasir
Phillips, Gerry
Qaadri, Shafiq
Ramal, Khalil
Rinaldi, Lou
Ruprecht, Tony
Sandals, Liz
Smith, Monique
Van Bommel, Maria
Wilkinson, John
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Zimmer, David

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Those opposed?

Nays

Gélinas, France
Kormos, Peter

Miller, Paul
Prue, Michael

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):
The ayes are 45; the nays are 4.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS

PROTECTION FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Ms. Sylvia Jones: This petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas supported-living residents in southwestern and eastern Ontario were subjected to picketing outside their homes during labour strikes in 2007 and 2009; and

"Whereas residents and neighbours had to endure megaphones, picket lines, portable bathrooms and shin-

ing lights at all hours of the day and night on their streets; and

"Whereas individuals with intellectual disabilities and organizations who support them fought for years to break down barriers and live in inclusive communities; and

"Whereas Bill 83 passed second reading in the Ontario Legislature on October 28, 2010;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Liberal government quickly schedule hearings for Sylvia Jones's Bill 83, the Protecting Vulnerable People Against Picketing Act, to allow for public hearings."

I, of course, support this petition and am pleased to affix my name to it and give it to page Melanie to take to the table.

DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition from the people of Nickel Belt.

"Whereas the Ontario government is making ... PET scanning a publicly insured health service available to cancer and cardiac patients" under certain conditions; and

"Whereas," since October 2009, "insured PET scans" are being performed "in Ottawa, London, Toronto, Hamilton and Thunder Bay; and

"Whereas the city of Greater Sudbury is a hub for health care in northeastern Ontario, with the Sudbury Regional Hospital, its regional cancer program and the Northern Ontario School of Medicine;

"We ... petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to make PET scans available through the Sudbury Regional Hospital, thereby serving and providing equitable access to the" people of the northeast.

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask Jonathan to bring it to the Clerk.

ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PROGRAM

Mr. David Caplan: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas in January 2009, Health Canada approved the medication Soliris on a priority basis for patients with paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria (PNH); and

"Whereas PNH is an ultra-rare, progressive and life-threatening blood disorder for which there were no therapeutic options until Soliris; and

"Whereas Soliris is the first and only proven effective treatment for PNH, significantly benefiting patients around the world;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To urge the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to immediately provide Soliris as a life-saving treatment option to patients with PNH in Ontario through public funding."

I have affixed my signature to this petition.

MILLER'S SCOTTISH BAKERY

Mr. Ted Arnott: I have a petition that's intended for the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It has 1,339 signatures, and it reads as follows:

"A Petition Against OMAFRA Regarding Miller's Scottish Bakery in Georgetown.

"We, the undersigned, do not agree with OMAFRA's legislation. Miller's Scottish Bakery is a bakery, not a meat processing plant."

I agree with the statement in the petition.

TAXATION

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have another petition from the people of Nickel Belt.

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Be it resolved that Dalton McGuinty immediately exempt electricity from the harmonized sales tax (HST)."

I support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask page Caleb to bring it to the Clerk.

FIREARMS CONTROL

Mr. Tony Ruprecht: I have an important petition. It reads, "To stop unlawful firearms in vehicles," and it's addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads as follows:

"Whereas the growing number of unlawful firearms in motor vehicles is threatening innocent citizens and our police officers;

"Whereas police officers, military personnel and lawfully licensed persons are the only people allowed to possess firearms; and

"Whereas a growing number of unlawful firearms are transported, smuggled and being found in motor vehicles; and

"Whereas impounding motor vehicles and suspending drivers' licences of persons possessing unlawful firearms would aid the police in their efforts to make our streets safer;

"We, the undersigned citizens, strongly request and petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass," this bill, "entitled the Unlawful Firearms in Vehicles Act, 2008, into law, so that we can reduce the number of crimes involving unlawful firearms in our communities."

I certainly agree with this petition, and I'm delighted to sign it.

HYDRO RATES

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette: I have a number of petitions that read:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the McGuinty government is pushing ahead with the installation of so-called smart meters and mandatory time-of-use billing ... despite the flaws with the program; and

"Whereas 21 energy distributors, including provincially owned Hydro One, said that the rush to make time of use mandatory ... doesn't give them time to fix all the problems with the meters, fix bugs with the software to run them, and to fix the inaccurately high bills they produce as a result; and

"Whereas the Ontario Energy Board, in a letter of August 4, admitted that energy distributors 'may encounter extraordinary and unanticipated circumstances during the implementation' of time of use, and said that 'these matters need to be addressed';

"Whereas relying on computer technology that the energy industry says is not ready isn't reliable and is making families pay too much on their hydro bills;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To call upon the McGuinty government to suspend the smart meter time-of-use program until billing problems are fixed and Ontario families are given the option of whether to participate in the time-of-use program" or not.

I affix my name in full support.

PARAMEDICS

Mr. Jim Brownell: I have a petition that reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas paramedics play a vital role in protecting the health and safety of Ontarians; and

"Whereas paramedics often put their own health and safety at risk, going above and beyond their duty in servicing Ontarians; and

"Whereas the government of Ontario annually recognizes police officers and firefighters with awards for bravery; and

"Whereas currently no award for paramedic bravery is awarded by the government of Ontario; and

"Whereas Ontario paramedics deserve recognition for acts of exceptional bravery while protecting Ontarians;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Enact Bill 115, a private member's bill introduced by MPP Maria Van Bommel on October 6, 2010, An Act to provide for the Ontario Award for Paramedic Bravery."

I support this petition, shall sign it and send it to the clerks' table.

SPEED LIMITS

Mr. Norm Miller: I have a petition regarding the speed limit through the village of Humphrey and Seguin township. It reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the current speed limit as posted through the village of Humphrey in the township of Seguin is 70 kilometres per hour; and

"Whereas Highway 141 passes through the village, consisting of an elementary school, fire hall, municipal

office and works department yard, a community centre, including library and arena, as well as a newly developed 25-unit subdivision; and

"Whereas the posted speed limit in the village of Rosseau, 15 kilometres east of Humphrey, is 50 kilometres per hour, does not have a school on the highway but has been deemed to be worthy of a reduced speed limit;

"Now, therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario reduce the posted speed limit within the boundaries of the village of Humphrey to 50 kilometres per hour."

I support this petition.

TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE

Mr. David Zimmer: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas to many Canadians, traditional Chinese medicine is medicine, period. They rely on these practices, such as acupuncture and Tuina, which are rooted in thousands of years of Chinese medical tradition, and depend upon the availability of traditional Chinese medical products for their day-to-day health needs. Also, it is the duty of the Ontario government to ensure that the health professions, such as TCM and acupuncture, are regulated and coordinated in the interest of public safety, that appropriate standards are developed and maintained. That is why we believe it is in the interest of both Ontario government and the TCM profession to work closely to overcome the challenges and to ensure fairness in the regulation of TCM and acupuncture...;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately dissolve the remaining distrusted members of the transitional council.

"To immediately create a new transitional council of the College of TCM Practitioners and Acupuncturists of Ontario which would be made up largely of representatives of the TCM community.

1350

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that reads:

"Whereas Ontario families are struggling to help put their kids through university;

"Whereas students in Ontario graduate with an average \$26,000 in debt and have the highest tuition and largest class sizes in the country; and

"Whereas Ontario tax dollars should be kept in Ontario to help Ontario students, not sent overseas;

"We, the undersigned, therefore petition the Legislative Assembly" of Ontario as follows:

"To call on the McGuinty government to cancel its plan to give foreign students scholarships of \$40,000 a

year and reinvest these funds in scholarships for Ontario students."

I affix my name in full support.

ROAD SAFETY

Mr. David Caplan: I have a petition—1,000 names in addition to the 20,000 that have already come in—that reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas nearly 5,000 pedestrians were killed or hurt in collisions in 2007 according to the Ontario Road Safety Annual Report; and

"Whereas aggressive driving and speed were factors in nearly half of Ontario traffic fatalities in 2007, between 2000 and 2007 more than 2,500 people were killed in speed-related collisions," according to the Ontario Road Safety Annual Report; and

"Whereas a recent Harris/Decima survey commissioned by the Ontario Road Builders' Association shows that 67% of Ontarians support the use of safety cameras to measure speed; and

"Whereas 76% believe that the Ontario government should make it a priority to crack down on aggressive drivers; and

"Whereas 69% feel an increasing number of aggressive drivers, especially speeders, have made our roads more dangerous than ever; and

"Whereas 82% of Ontarians are confident that greater enforcement of the speed limit in community safety and construction zones would help to improve safety; and

"Whereas safety camera studies in Norway, the UK and New Zealand have been proven to deter and prevent road traffic collisions and related casualties" according to the British Medical Journal, 2005; and

"Whereas safety cameras are being used currently to deter speeders in several North American jurisdictions including Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Quebec, Colorado, District of Columbia, Illinois, Maryland, Ohio, Tennessee, Utah and Washington; and

"Whereas there is no question that Ontarians believe safety cameras are the way to help police crack down on aggressive drivers who continue to ignore the speed limit and put lives at risk;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to implement the enactment of Bill 136, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act with respect to safety cameras, which supports the use of safety cameras to measure speed near schools, community centres and construction zones on provincial highways and local roads."

I wholeheartedly agree with this petition, and I have affixed my signature to it.

HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

Mr. Norm Miller: I have a petition to do with the paving of shoulders on provincial highways. It reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas pedestrians and cyclists are increasingly using secondary highways to support healthy lifestyles and expand active transportation; and

"Whereas paved shoulders on highways enhance public safety for all highway users, expand tourism opportunities and support good health; and

"Whereas paved shoulders help to reduce the maintenance cost of repairs to highway surfaces; and

"Whereas" the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka's "private member's Bill 100 provides for a minimum one-metre paved shoulder for the benefit of pedestrians, cyclists and motorists;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That" the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka's "private member's Bill 100, which requires a minimum one-metre paved shoulder on designated highways, receive swift passage through the legislative process."

I support this petition.

IDENTITY THEFT

Mr. Tony Ruprecht: I have a petition that was given to me by the Consumer Federation of Canada, and therefore it's very important. It's to the Parliament of Ontario and the Minister of Government Services. It reads as follows:

"Whereas identity theft is the fastest-growing crime in North America;

"Whereas confidential and private information is being stolen on a regular basis, affecting literally thousands of people;

"Whereas the cost of this crime exceeds billions of dollars;

"Whereas countless hours are" being "wasted to restore one's good credit rating;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, demand that Bill 38, which passed the second reading unanimously in the Ontario Legislature ... be brought before committee and that the following issues be included for consideration and debate:

"(1) All consumer reports should be provided in a truncated (masked-out) form, protecting our vital private information such as SIN and loan account numbers.

"(2) Should a consumer reporting agency discover that there has been an unlawful disclosure of consumer information, the agency should immediately inform the affected consumer.

"(3) The consumer reporting agency shall only report credit inquiry records resulting from actual applications for credit or increase of credit, except in a report given to the consumer.

"(4) The consumer reporting agency shall investigate disputed information within 30 days and correct, supplement or automatically delete any information found unconfirmed, incomplete or inaccurate."

Since I agree, I'm delighted to sign it.

DOG OWNERSHIP

Mrs. Julia Munro: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas aggressive dogs are found among all breeds and mixed breeds; and

"Breed-specific legislation has been shown to be an expensive and ineffective approach to dog bite prevention; and

"Problem dog owners are best dealt with through education, training and legislation encouraging responsible behaviour;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To repeal the breed-specific sections of the Dog Owners' Liability Act (2005) and to implement legislation that encourages responsible ownership of all dog breeds and types."

As I am in agreement with this, I have affixed my signature to give it to page Caleb.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ENSURING INTEGRITY IN ONTARIO ELECTIONS ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 ASSURANT L'INTÉGRITÉ DES ÉLECTIONS EN ONTARIO

Mr. Bentley moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 196, An Act to amend the Election Act with respect to certain electoral practices / Projet de loi 196, Loi modifiant la Loi électorale en ce qui concerne certaines manœuvres électorales.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Further debate?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: I'm very pleased to rise on this bill. It is short in terms of its number of words, it is specific in its terms, but it strikes at the very heart of our democracy. It addresses essential, fundamental issues, such as, is everybody going to be able to exercise their right to vote free of interference, free of disruption, and free of practices which would disentitle people from exercising their very cherished right to vote?

Sometimes when we stand in a place like this, when we stand in a place of such history, when we stand in the place of the province of Ontario's government, and we're all elected members, we can forget how precious democracy is. We can forget how important what we have here in Ontario and Canada really is. We can forget how it is something that is cherished throughout the world, but held by fewer than cherish it. And, oh, there are countries and there are places where democracy is said to exist, but realistically exists in name only.

Didn't you hear during the run-up to the recent federal election how some people were concerned that we were having another vote, or we were having a vote, or, "Gosh, those elections, sometimes they get in the way of

government"? Well, in fact, it's the renewal of government. It's the right of the people to whom we report to actually have a voice in who is representing their views, the views that those people hold.

1400

You'll remember during those discussions in the run-up to the recent federal election, at the same time that some people were saying, "Gosh, I'd rather not get an election call" or "I'd rather not receive a brochure" or "I'd rather not be bothered with the signs," there were others in other parts of the world who were anxiously, desperately, decidedly placing their life, their freedom, everything they had, at risk so that they could obtain what we take for granted too often, what we have here in Ontario, in Canada, so that they could have a real right to cast a ballot that wasn't prejudged, predetermined, rigged, where the outcome wasn't decided before the ballots had even been cast, where the outcome wasn't jiggled from what the ballots would otherwise say it should be.

We have something in the province of Ontario that's very precious, and that is why, from time to time, the government of Ontario will take steps to address the right to vote, to address the way in which we're able to vote, to address the means by which we can vote. Essentially, what we're trying to achieve—and governments of all political stripes have, I know, looked at this through the same lens—is the right of every elector to cast their ballot freely, in a way that appropriately and completely reflects their wishes.

I want to address this specific bill, but I just want to say at the beginning, whatever election it is that you have a right to cast a ballot in, whether it's a municipal one, a federal one, a provincial one, whatever the polls might be saying, whatever individuals might be saying, cast your ballot. Exercise that very precious right. Make sure that you exercise the franchise that has been given by the Fathers of Confederation, a franchise that has been given by those who established democracy in this province, a franchise that has been defended over the years by men and women risking their lives in all parts of the world, a franchise that has been given so that we can enjoy what so many people in the world would love to have and sometimes we take for granted. Cast your ballot.

I know turnout rates are not as high as we would like them to be. Lots of different strategies have been thought of to encourage more people to cast their ballot. There are lots of different ideas on how to get people to go to the polls. We actually had a vote on one in the last election. There are lots of different ideas, but at the end of the day, it's something that doesn't take a long time, that's not terribly complicated. It's your way to have a direct input on those who will be governing, a direct input, through them, to policy, and a direct say in your future. And who among us would not want a say in our future? Who among us would stand and say, "I don't want to have anything to do with my future. I'll let others decide my future for me"? Nobody.

Virtually everybody—there may be the odd exception—takes the right to comment, sometimes with a cer-

tain colour, about how governments of the day are doing and the things they should be doing or the things they should not be doing, or how they might have failed to take your advice. Well, casting a ballot is the most effective way to make sure you're heard, the most effective way to make sure your advice is heard, the most effective way to influence the results.

We have voter turnout rates of just over 50%—it should be 100%—and it's particularly a challenge among young people. If you have a room of 100 people, if those 100 people are 50 and older, chances are pretty good that 75 of them are going to the polls. If you have a room of 100 people aged 18 to 25, chances are pretty good that about 25 will go to the polls. That is a very significant difference. It doesn't necessarily speak well for the future.

We want everybody's voice, and I say that in a non-partisan way. I always encourage people to go to vote; I always encourage them. Whether their reception has been rosy and joyous or somewhat more measured, I always encourage people to go vote, make sure they cast their ballot and—I'm sure, like every other member—give them whatever information they require to be able to exercise their franchise.

That brings us to the very short piece of legislation we have before us today. Here, we're addressing what I really hope isn't an issue but I fear might be, what I really hope is not something that we need to address, but we need to make sure that we can address it if necessary.

We've heard the stories. A number of people in this Legislature have actually been quoted in the press. A number can relate stories, either that they were told or some that they might claim to have witnessed, of voters, during the recent federal election, receiving calls—they're always calls, aren't they? They're always the anonymous. The allegations are that people would receive calls from those representing themselves to be Elections Canada officials.

Remember, I am relating stories, not evidence; that is for somebody else. I am relating allegations. Very clearly, they're allegations. I want to make it clear to all: They're allegations, but they're allegations you have to take seriously. They're allegations you cannot ignore. They're allegations you cannot let sit because they would, if true, strike at the very heart of what is so cherished in this place: the heart which is democracy and the right to freely exercise your vote.

So I turn to the bill. The bill addresses these allegations that were made that people representing themselves to be Elections Canada officials would phone somebody up and say, essentially, "Guess what? Voter turnout has been really heavy at your poll, so we need you to go to a different place to cast your ballot. We need you to go somewhere else to cast your ballot." The stories are more than a few: of people who went to the somewhere else and found that, in fact, there was no polling station there. In fact, the original polling station was the right polling station.

If there was one story, it would be bad; if there were two stories, it would be bad. But there are many in

different parts of the province and different parts of the country. They represented themselves to be Elections Canada officials. Others represented themselves to be—allegedly. I'm only repeating allegations, only repeating stories, not reporting, not suggesting that I'm repeating evidence. I leave the evidence collection to others. But others reported that they received a call from somebody representing themselves to be from a certain party. That caller gave them information which turned out not to be true and, in some cases, inhibited, prevented, made more difficult a person's right to vote; or they represented themselves to be from a party and started delivering a message which might have been rude, insulting, suggesting badgering or cajoling, all courses of conduct that nobody would condone and nobody would suggest was appropriate, no matter who's doing it. It's just not appropriate.

1410

This was a concern, because it was alleged to have occurred not just in one place but in quite a number of places. So you turn to the legislation to say, "Well, that's bad, so somebody is going to investigate and they'll take whatever appropriate action," because you have to investigate. Let's be clear. We've tried to be very careful here, counting the stories and counting the allegations. You have to investigate, and somebody does that. It might be the Elections Canada officials, it might be the police, it might be others; somebody else investigates to determine the accuracy of the allegations. That's important, because lots of stories are told, but you have to determine the accuracy of allegations. So I leave that to somebody else. I leave that to another to do, as is entirely appropriate. Let somebody else figure it out.

But the legislation governing the federal election has specific prohibitions of this type of activity. If the investigation reveals a factual foundation, then action can be taken specific to the allegation. In certain other jurisdictions in the country, in certain other provinces, the legislation contains specific prohibitions. Of course, when these allegations were made, it didn't take us more than a second or two to turn to our legislation just to make sure: Do we have something here that will protect us? You can imagine the surprise when we realized, no.

You can always take a prohibition and argue an interpretation, and the election legislation in Ontario contains a number of prohibitions of conduct, which is specifically called—it's not my term—a corrupt practice. So you can take a look at the legislation and say, "Well, I might be able to squeeze it in here. I might be able to argue it's covered over there. I might be able to sidewind it in the other one." But standing back and taking a look at that, we just knew—absolutely knew—that if that allegation had been made during or at the conclusion of an election in the province of Ontario, one of the first questions people would have asked, one of the first places they would have pointed—they would have said, "Well, government, Mr. Attorney General, do we have anything in our legislation that covers it?" You can't stand up and say no, because we would have been put on

notice. It would have been drawn to our attention. So we needed to address it specifically, and that's what we're doing.

I'm going to get to the provisions in just a second, but I can already hear the naysayers. I don't anticipate any in this chamber actually, but out there you can anticipate what people might say—the "might" is essential. They might say, "Those who wish to break the law will always be ingenious," and yes, they will. So we look to have the strongest possible laws to act as a deterrent. We look to have the strongest possible laws to make it clear to society we're prepared to stand up for fundamental principles. We also look to have the strongest possible laws so that when people do break the law, they can be brought to justice. When they do things that they shouldn't do, they can be brought to justice. When they take the steps that should not be taken, they will be brought to justice surely, swiftly, cleanly and clearly.

You take a look at the legislation and this conduct which was alleged, which was rumoured, which was spoken about, in some cases by those sitting beside others receiving calls, and this conduct wasn't specifically addressed. So you look around for other places. Could it be covered by the Criminal Code? Well, there are provisions in the Criminal Code that can address some of it. There are provisions in the Criminal Code that might be able to be used to address this. Those provisions have a history, have a purpose, have a reason that they were placed in there, and their implementation has been the result of many, many decades of use and interpretation by the courts. They've acquired a judicial history, a case history that in some instances makes it challenging to apply to the type of allegation that's made in 2011 and might need to be used, might need to be the subject of legislative sanction.

When we took a look at the legislation, we also noticed that not only were some of these allegations not specifically covered—and to some extent that's not surprising, is it? Because, realistically, people become ingenious, don't they, in the ways they're going to break the law? The use of phone banks, the use of the Internet, the use of automated calls, the use of computers, Twitter, Facebook, this and that and the other thing, makes it quite a bit easier today to make many calls than it ever used to be. It makes it quite a bit easier to make calls anonymously. It makes it quite a bit easier to make calls from places that aren't in the province of Ontario or even Canada. The level of disguise that can be used through electronic means is quite a bit more sophisticated than it has ever been.

So we took a look at the allegations about the stories, about the complaints and the concerns. We took a look at the legislation. We said, "Ah, that's wanting. It has not got specific prohibitions." We took a look at other pieces of legislation like the Criminal Code and said, "Well...." I mean, lawyers are always ingenious. We can be ingenious. We can be determined. We wanted to be certain, not just determined. We wanted to be accurate, not just ingenious, and the two can go together, but in advance

there's never a guarantee that ingenuity will lead to the result that everybody would think was appropriate. So we took a look at the legislation and we said we needed something else.

That's how we came to draft two provisions, and they're interesting provisions. I just want to talk about two.

The new 96.2: "A person who, inside or outside Ontario, prevents another person from voting or impedes or otherwise interferes with the person's exercise of the vote is guilty of an offence and on conviction is liable to a fine of not more than \$5,000."

Now, very significant there: a person "inside or outside Ontario," we're prepared to prosecute. Yes, there are challenges; there are jurisdictional challenges. There always are. But as members of the Legislature will know, Canada has asserted jurisdiction for offences committed elsewhere. Ontario can assert jurisdiction for violations within its territory for offences committed elsewhere. And you say, "Well, you might never find them." It will be the rare offence committed in the province of Ontario that doesn't have an Ontario connection of some sort, and so you follow the trail. You swim the river. You may not have the direct perpetrator, but who is that perpetrator in touch with? How were they in touch with them? What was the benefit for somebody outside the borders of the province, even the country, thinking that they would engage in this type of alleged activity?

You can think that there's got to be a trail there, and the signal very clearly is that we're going to find you. If it happens, we're going to find you. We're going to get you. We're going to trace it, and just when it's most inconvenient, just when everybody thinks it's gone away, just when all is quiet—"Oh, we got away with it"—zap.

1420

"A person who, inside or outside ... prevents ... impedes or otherwise interferes with the person's exercise of the vote...." That's the essential part, isn't it? Prevents, impedes or otherwise interferes with the person's exercise of the vote: That's what this is all about. It's the exercise. However you exercise it, exercise it. Exercise is always good. However you exercise, exercise is always good.

Here is a little bit of what I was talking about before, a little bit of how it's not just the direct perpetrator; it can be those who have aided, abetted, counselled, procured, assisted. Subsection (2): "A person who, inside or outside Ontario, does anything for the purpose of aiding another person to commit the offence described in subsection (1), abets another person in committing it, or counsels or procures another person to commit it is a party to the offence."

That's what I was saying. You might think that you're out of the jurisdiction, you're safe, but there will be a connection. It can be found. The criminal courts are replete with those who thought they got away with it years ago, but they've been found.

A second offence is being brought in. It's called "impersonation." Section 96.3: "A person who, inside or

outside Ontario, falsely represents himself or herself to be any of the following is guilty of an offence and on conviction is liable to a fine of not more than \$5,000...." It's not the interference here, it's not the impeding, it's not the preventing; it's the representation, and more properly the false representation, that's at issue here. It doesn't matter whether it succeeds. It doesn't matter whether it prevents, impedes or interferes in. It's the false representation, because we take this as potentially striking at the heart of.

Who are those people who one cannot falsely represent themselves to be?

"1. An employee or agent of the office of the Chief Electoral Officer." It's a pretty broad range of people performing all sorts of very important work.

"2. A person appointed under this act.

"3. A candidate or a person who is authorized by the candidate to act on his or her behalf.

"4. A person who is authorized by a registered party or registered constituency association to act on its behalf."

Now you can start to see how these specific, tailored provisions address the allegations, the stories, the other issues that were said to arise, might be investigated—leave that to others. So we can specifically address them. You don't have to get creative about other provisions and other statutes designed for other purposes. We can specifically get at them through this—a very broad net which will stand as a specific, direct, complete code of what you can't do to address those issues. These two provisions, of course, stand with all the existing prohibitions, which are numerous.

You heard me speak of a couple of penalties—\$5,000—but here's the overriding penalty: "(97.1) If, when a person is convicted of an offence under section 90, 94, 95, 96, 96.1," or the two I just read, "96.2 or 96.3, the presiding judge finds that the offence was committed knowingly"—knowingly, which is a state of mind, and my friend opposite will know from criminal law days this is an aware state of mind—"the person is also guilty of a corrupt practice and is liable to one or both of the following:

"1. A fine of not more than \$25,000, instead of the fine that would otherwise apply.

"2. Imprisonment for a term of not more than two years less a day."

You say, "Well, okay." The existing penalties in the act are a \$5,000 maximum or six months in jail maximum, or both. So what we've done for all that are corrupt practices here is to raise the fine: five times as big a fine and two years less a day, which is the most jail that a province can provide, under the Constitution—or both.

You say, "Well, that's not very much for somebody making hundreds of calls." Well, then you get into the definition of "offence," because it will be argued that every call is potentially a separate offence. So you can see it gets potentially very expensive, very quickly.

We're bringing these specific offences within this piece of legislation forward and we're asking the House to consider—and I know I've spoken for a few more

minutes than you might have anticipated it would take, and I just have a few more to go. It's a few more than you might have anticipated, because I know it's a sentiment shared that the right to vote is cherished; it's essential; we want people to exercise it freely, without interference, without being impeded. We want to make sure that we have the proper support for that.

A number of steps have been taken by this government and by the House with respect to the right to vote over the past several years—a number of different and specific steps. You'll remember we brought in some amendments for the municipal elections just a few years ago to make sure that at the municipal level, voters were appropriately supported in their exercise of the democratic franchise. We brought in some changes within the province of Ontario over the past several years that, likewise, were brought in to address some very important and significant issues, issues which affect either how you exercise your franchise, the circumstances in which you exercise your franchise or the times when you can exercise your franchise. Just let me address a few.

You'll remember that in 2007, the government introduced legislation to modernize provincial elections, provide some additional ways to cast a ballot and to enhance both access and the integrity of elections. One of those involved a number of advance poll days. Remember just a few minutes ago, I spoke about everybody exercising their franchise. We want to make sure everyone gets out to vote. Well, now there are going to be a lot of extra days on which you can vote—a lot of extra days. We're going to cover just about every possibility. So it won't be any more of that, "Oops, I missed the one advance poll day and I can't go on election day." There will be lots of opportunity to get in there, lots of places to go, opportunity to get in and cast a ballot, which really doesn't take very long most of the time. People will have that chance to vote, and you'll be able to get that voting percentage up, we really hope.

1430

One of the other things that was done in that legislation was to give the Chief Electoral Officer the ability, at their instance, to test some new voting methods in by-elections. We've heard lots of different talk over the years about how people wanted to be able to vote by this method or that method. Well, now that the Chief Electoral Officer will be able to test them in a by-election, as opposed to a general election, it enables the Chief Electoral Officer to better manage the new method, better manage any issues that arise and have a better sense of assessing its ability to increase voter turnout without those other issues that can sometimes be of concern—misrepresentation by voters of who they are and other things such as that.

It also put in place during that period of time some voter identification requirements to make sure the person presenting at the polls is actually the person who's supposed to present at the polls. So there were some additional identification requirements that were imposed. Those are just a few of the highlights of that time.

Of course, the permanent register of electors was brought in at the time. It used to be that every time you had an election, you sort of ran around and redid the list. We all thought that maybe we could do it a little better than that. Now we've got a permanent register of electors that can continually be updated, refreshed and corrected, so you're always building on a base that's being forever strengthened.

In 2010—and I don't want to forget this; I want to make specific reference to it—the Select Committee on Elections, an all-party committee with representatives of every party in the House, worked very hard; it heard lots. It came together with the Election Statute Law Amendment Act, 2010. It gave some additional flexibility to Ontarians in how they would actually cast their ballot. One of those provisions allows Ontarians to cast their vote by special ballot. Again, it also gives some additional flexibility to the Chief Electoral Officer, who again is the one who's doing it full-time, to design a voting process that's responsive to the needs of voters, some who have special needs, some who have special issues. It gave voters with disabilities access to voting equipment that would enable them to independently mark a ballot. Remember, what we're trying to do here is make sure that everyone has the right to exercise their franchise and that that franchise freely represents their wish.

Those are just a few of the changes that we've made in the past. The one that we're proposing today, asking the Legislature to continue today and consider today—and I hope we have enough time for that consideration. I know everybody will want to speak at some length on these issues, and I hope we have that opportunity to have a good, full debate. But I really do commend and hope that the members will see and that all will agree that it's important that we have these protections in place in time for the upcoming provincial election. As I say, they are based on stories, and stories are only that. They're based on allegations, and allegations are only that. But you have to make sure that you ask yourself the question: If it did happen, how could we deal with it? That's why we're introducing this.

We did move fairly quickly to introduce this. We moved fairly quickly, and I thank the members of the House for their consideration in that. We moved fairly quickly, and I'm looking forward to the debate which will ensue. I'm looking forward to the good comments of my colleagues.

I want to say a special thanks to two, and by thanking two I don't exclude the many. I want to thank, first of all, my parliamentary assistant, the MPP for Willowdale. I'm not allowed to say his name, David Zimmer, am I? But I did. He has worked for so long on the issues affecting the Ministry of the Attorney General. He has been at the forefront of so much legislative change. He has really been a standard-bearer for so long. I really want to thank him for his work.

I want to thank the government House leader, who has a lot to do with elections and election legislation. I want to thank the government House leader for the input on this.

I want to thank the MPP from Guelph, MPP Sandals, for the work that she has done.

I want to thank the members on the opposite side of the House, as well, who, over the years—as passionately as we can address issues like this, we all stand as one when it comes to protecting the right of people to vote, to making sure people can freely exercise their franchise and that their franchise reflects their wish. I thank them for the great advice and input given to many over the years.

As I say, I look forward to the debate as it continues, and I'll be listening intently, whether fastened to my seat or attending to other duties.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Questions and comments.

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette: I very much appreciate the opportunity to comment on the minister's remarks. One of the key things that he mentioned that I just want to jump in on was the different aspects about giving people a reason to vote. Quite frankly, I say the same thing to all parties: If you want people to vote and get more actively involved, give them a reason to get involved. Give them a sense of understanding that they make a difference, and that will have a big impact.

I know during the past federal election, there were a number of calls that had gone out, particularly in my riding, where the individuals were asked by a bogus organization to make contributions to buy a sign—not only that, but they could vote online. These are the sorts of things that have a huge impact that didn't come out in any of the discussions and debates. I know it had a huge impact locally, in Oshawa, on what was taking place. They were calling up individuals—they got a database from somewhere; I'm not quite sure where—on behalf of the specific parties, and falsely stating to the individuals that they could buy their sign online, which was unheard of, or they could vote online, which was something brand new and completely contrary to what had taken place.

I'm reading a Globe and Mail headline which says, "Joe Volpe Turfs Campaign Worker Caught Trashing Green Pamphlets." The reason I mention that is because there are all sorts of other aspects that take place in campaigns. We're replacing signs on a regular basis. There are all sorts of things. But deliberately targeting somebody to go elsewhere is substantially beyond the norm. We want to make sure that that's addressed and taken care of.

Quite frankly, I know that the one concern in the minister's speech is those targeted outside the province of Ontario. If you're dealing with those organizations that target outside, possibly an additional subline—I can't remember if it was section 92 or 97 where you spoke about that—whereby those individuals who specifically target organizations or entities outside the province could receive an additional fine. It would be a disincentive for at least going outside the province.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further comments and questions.

Mr. Peter Kormos: We're looking forward to participating in this debate.

I enjoyed the comments of the Attorney General.

I am concerned about the manner in which the government brought this legislation forward. It's going to pass before the House adjourns for its summer break and the election period. I don't know what the government has in mind. Warren Kinsella is going to have to revise and publish a second edition of his book *The War Room* once this legislation becomes law. You're coming close to putting him out of business, for Pete's sake, and I say that with a lot of regard and respect for Warren Kinsella.

1440

Of course, we saw just yesterday an illustration of dirty tricks, if you will, with one Conservative candidate from down Niagara Falls way. We still don't know the whole story to the story, but there's probably a story inside a story inside a story there. The impression one is increasingly getting is that was a dirty trick—

Interjection.

Mr. Peter Kormos: —as noted.

I'm also going to be talking about the bill that was discussed here two Thursdays ago, Mr. Arnott's Bill 195. I was very disappointed when I read the Hansard of that and saw the government's line on it. The spokesperson is someone for whom I have great regard, and I'm confident that the government spokesperson, during the debate on Bill 195, was following marching orders. He could indeed invoke the Nuremberg defence, if required to, because the comments that were made were peculiar in the context of, especially, the Sorbara report—and that was the committee that he and I participated in. Thank goodness I'm not the main person—Howard Hampton is. But I substituted for the member for Kenora-Rainy River.

The issue about—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. Further comments and questions.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I'm very happy to speak in support of Bill 196. I think that we have to acknowledge the evolutionary nature of public policy as we have this discussion and that there's always an ongoing need to monitor our policies and make sure that we keep up with society, that we keep up with technology and we keep up with the needs of Ontarians. In fact, that's what's at issue here: ensuring the right to freely exercise the vote, as the Attorney General has said so eloquently.

Unfortunately, we find ourselves in circumstances where there are allegations and stories of practices that we perhaps have not got the right protections in place for, and that's what this is about.

When I think about the right to vote, I always think about my paternal grandmother, Eva Crummer, who was born in 1888. She didn't have the right to vote until she was nearly 30. It was my grandmother who impressed upon me how critical it is to exercise your vote, to make your voice heard. So when I knock on a door and a young person comes to the door and says to me, "I don't vote" or "I don't care," I always push back, because it's not about whether he or she votes for me; it's about making his or her voice heard. If he or she does not do that, then

someone else will express his or her voice in the place of that young person.

We want everyone in this province to have the habit of voting, and so we want to remove every barrier. We want to create every opportunity and make sure that any new technology or any new practice that sounds slick and clever at the time, that might get in the way of people voting—that we make sure that all those practices are fair and that we have in place the protections that make sure that every single person in this province who is eligible can get to the poll and vote as he or she wishes.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further comments?

Mr. Steve Clark: I'm pleased to provide a couple of minutes of comments on Bill 196 in response to the Attorney General.

I was here, as the member for Welland mentioned in his comments and questions for my colleague the member for Wellington-Halton Hills, for the discussion we had a couple of Thursdays ago on his Bill 195 at private members' business.

It's interesting to note that the Attorney General talks about stories and rumours and innuendo. We had that debate that Thursday afternoon, and we didn't talk about rumours and innuendo. We talked, in our party, about the Chief Electoral Officer and comments that Mr. Essensa made to improve and strengthen our legislation. He wasn't talking about new technologies and new tricks. He wasn't talking about stories or innuendo. He was talking about strengthening our election laws and dealing with collusion.

It's interesting that we have two pieces of legislation, numbered consecutively, 195 and 196, introduced within one day of each other—and the fact that one had such resistance by the government. The member for Willowdale, in his speech that Thursday, used the word “mischievous” dozens of times when he talked about Bill 196. I can quote some stories about the other bill—

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Bill 195.

Mr. Steve Clark: Sorry, 195. Thank you, Madam Minister. I can do the same thing on the other bill. So it's interesting that we're having this debate when we could have brought both bills together and brought them forward. That's what we're missing here.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The minister has two minutes to respond.

Hon. Christopher Bentley: I thank the members from Oshawa and Welland, the Minister of Transportation and the MPP from Leeds-Grenville for their comments. The Minister of Transportation said it so eloquently in relation to her grandmother: It's that very precious right, a cherished right.

My colleague from Oshawa spoke about a number of different issues. That's right: Whatever the issues are, whatever the allegations are, let's make sure we have the appropriate legislative tools to address things that would interfere with, impede or prevent exercise of the franchise.

My colleague from Leeds-Grenville spoke about other pieces of legislation. That debate is for all of us, and that

debate, I understand, occurred. Today we're debating this; we're debating these provisions. I know we'll all give our full attention to these provisions and hopefully agree at the end, on an all-party basis, that they are appropriate—that whatever may be in the minds of others about other things that should be done, they are appropriate.

I want to thank my colleague from Welland for his comments as well. He might have given us a little flavour of some of the comments he will have later on the question of jurisdiction. It's always challenging when a jurisdiction—a state or province or country—asserts jurisdiction beyond its borders. But it really is not asserting its jurisdiction in some other place. It's saying that if you're in another place and you purport to interfere with ours, then we'll find a way to attach liability to that, directly or through parties who will.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Ted Arnott: I'm pleased to join the debate this afternoon in the Ontario Legislature with respect to second reading of Bill 196, An Act to amend the Election Act with respect to certain electoral practices. It stands in the name of the Attorney General and was introduced in this House on May 17.

I think it's important to point out that it was introduced by the Attorney General after the official opposition was informed that the government would be bringing forward no new legislation before the end of the session. Unfortunately, our party, I believe, was not consulted before the bill was introduced. Normally, you would expect that on changes to the Election Act, there would be some sort of process that would involve all three political parties to discuss proposed changes before introduction of the bill, as has been the case most times in the past, to the best of my knowledge, when the Election Act has been changed.

I'm pleased to follow the Attorney General. I listened to his speech, and he was his usual eloquent self; he certainly expressed his views well. But I don't believe he addressed all the relevant and salient points with respect to this issue, and most of all the way my Bill 195 was defeated in the Legislature on May 19, I guess was, the last Thursday this House sat.

This bill is fairly straightforward. This bill that the government has introduced, Bill 196—really just a couple of pages—“amends the Election Act to add new sections 96.2 and 96.3. Section 96.2 prohibits interference with voting. Section 96.3 prohibits impersonation of electoral officials, candidates and persons authorized to act on behalf of candidates, parties and constituency associations.

“Several offences under the act, including the ones described in new sections 96.2 and 96.3, constitute ‘corrupt practices’ if committed knowingly. The existing penalty for a person who is found guilty of a corrupt practice is a fine of not more than \$5,000, imprisonment for a term of not more than six months, or both. The maximum fine for a corrupt practice is increased to

\$25,000 and the maximum term of imprisonment to two years less a day.”

Of course, the Attorney General, in his comments this afternoon, indicated and wanted to lead the House to believe that it is his intention to create the best election law possible, with strong penalties to enforce the revisions he is proposing, but the very same arguments could have been made about Bill 195, my bill that was, again, brought forward recently and defeated by the government members.

1450

The Attorney General, in the context of his remarks, talked about the fact that this bill is based in response to allegations—that was the word that he used. He said that they’re not proven, and went to great lengths, at the start of his remarks, to indicate that they were merely allegations, innuendo, hearsay—let’s put it that way. But the fact is, the government is obviously wanting to be seen to be responding to these allegations and ensuring that those kinds of things that were alleged to have happened do not happen in the next provincial election, which is fine enough, but we have to call them what they are: allegations. In fact, my bill, Bill 195, was based on advice that we received at a select committee of the Legislature in testimony from the chief elections officer. It was not based on innuendo; it was not based on allegations; it was not based on hearsay. It was based on factual information that was brought forward at the committee, and I know that the member from Willowdale is well aware of that as well.

Before I continue to expound on this bill, I think it’s important to point out that I intend to share my time with my colleague the member for Leeds–Grenville, who’s done a great job on this issue as well and has done a lot of work to bring forward the public interest with respect to this particular issue.

On May 19, this Legislature debated Bill 195, my bill, An Act to amend the Election Finances Act to ban collusion in electoral advertising. During that debate, the member for Willowdale made some very interesting remarks. He said that Bill 195 was, in his opinion, “just a fuzzy piece of legislation, brought in in a political year as we’re approaching a political and obvious election.” The member continued, “I say at best it’s confusing, or mischievous and redundant.”

My question to the member for Willowdale is, was he describing my Bill 195 or was he describing the government’s Bill 196? Bill 196 could well be considered a confusing, mischievous and redundant effort to distract the public from the Liberals’ own electoral mischief-making and their shameful vote on May 19 against my Bill 195, which would have gone a long way towards putting an end to collusion in advertising during election campaigns. They rejected that sensible bill. Instead, they rushed ahead with Bill 196.

I think it’s very interesting to note that my Bill 195 was introduced on a Monday, and the very next day, Bill 196 was brought forward in the Legislature, in spite of the fact that the government House leader had advised

the official opposition that there would be no more legislation brought forward by the government before the end of the session. That’s what we understood. So why did they bring this forward the day after my bill was introduced? Interesting, very interesting—and somewhat fishy. They tried to distract the public from Bill 195, our legislation, so that their friends in the Working Families Coalition would continue their plan of unfettered advertising, limited only by the funds that they can extract from the membership of the unions and the organizations comprising the coalition, and even from those who, like my wife, Lisa, a public school teacher, would rather have their union dues not spent on political ads.

Perhaps the Liberals thought they needed to shield the Working Families Coalition, its dubious advertising campaigns and the Liberal Party itself from Bill 195. It’s clear they believed that they shouldn’t be constrained from campaign spending limits designed to create a level playing field for all political parties. Working Families and other so-called third parties now have no limits on the amount that they can spend to support or attack a particular candidate or party during an election, and we have seen the Working Families advertising. As recently as last week, I saw one of the TV ads. I’m not sure if it’s a new one or not, because I hadn’t seen them previously, but the fact is, they are clearly targeting our leader, Tim Hudak. Parties, on the other hand, are limited to total campaign spending of approximately \$8 million, according to the Canadian Press.

I want to return again to the member for Willowdale, who complained that my Bill 195 did not contain a definition section. It would have been “impossible to enforce,” he said. But reading the government’s Bill 196, it would appear that it too lacks a definition section. It sets out specific fines for those guilty of a “corrupt practice,” yet the bill makes no mention of collusion in advertising designed to skirt our election spending limits. Many people would consider that to be one of the most unfair practices of all, yet this bill makes no mention of collusion in advertising.

The member from Willowdale also claimed, incredibly, that “collusion and implied hanky-panky going on behind the scenes” is already dealt with. But that’s at odds with the facts, and what the member—who should know better, as a member of the bar. I believe he does know this. He should have known it, at least, because he should have listened to the chief elections officer when, on May 7, 2009, the chief elections officer testified before the Select Committee on Elections. Do you know who was a member of that committee at that time? Why, none other than the member for Willowdale. So the member for Willowdale, of all people, should know that Greg Essensa, the chief elections officer, told the committee that he believes that a review and update of Ontario’s election finance laws is in fact warranted.

He also explained that, under current law, third parties are free to co-operate and coordinate their efforts with recognized parties. I quote from his remarks from Hansard: “there is no specific provision that prohibits a third party from co-operating or coordinating its adver-

tising with either a political party or one of its candidates, provided that the party/candidate is not actually controlling the third party's advertising." Based on Mr. Essensa's testimony, it would appear that the member from Willowdale was completely and flatly wrong when he said the collusion was already dealt with—wrong, wrong, wrong.

Mr. Essensa also tells us that there are already more stringent requirements in place federally, in British Columbia, in New Brunswick and in the province of Quebec, and that there were also regulations being proposed in Alberta at the time of his testimony. Again, I quote Mr. Essensa's testimony from Hansard: "It is, or will be, an offence in these jurisdictions to collude for the purposes of circumventing spending limits for political parties, candidates and third parties."

With my Bill 195, the McGuinty government had a real opportunity to show it was serious about strengthening our elections law to ensure fairness and transparency in our provincial election campaigns. Unfortunately, the Liberals rejected that opportunity, choosing instead to follow their own selfish political interest, in essence turning a blind eye to collusion in electoral advertising as long as it benefits them.

So instead of addressing a very real threat to the fairness of our elections, instead of ensuring that our democracy is on a level playing field for all parties, the McGuinty Liberals have instead decided to go after what they apparently believe to be a much bigger threat: the poll clerks who they fear might wilfully miscount ballots. Why has the McGuinty government decided to target our poll clerks, our returning officers and our dedicated elections staff and volunteers? Do the Liberals genuinely believe that there is an epidemic of corruption on the part of those who count their ballots?

Interjection.

Mr. Ted Arnott: I submit and suggest to the government House leader that she read the bill, because if she read the bill, she would see this:

"Section 92 of the act is repealed and the following substituted:

"Wilful miscount of ballots"—and all kinds of suggestions that they don't trust the poll clerks. These are the people who, notwithstanding their own political views and notwithstanding sometimes difficult circumstances, are, in almost every case, dedicated, committed, patriotic people who believe in fairness. I have confidence in the people who count the ballots in the province of Ontario, especially in the riding of Wellington-Halton Hills; I trust them.

For the McGuinty Liberals to make these people the issue at a time when our procedures, our checks and balances and democratic traditions have long been established, it seems to me to be another sign that Bill 196 was just a desperate attempt to muddy the waters in the days leading up to the debate on Bill 195.

In my remarks on May 19, I noted:

"As Canadians, we rightly value—indeed, we treasure—our democratic rights. Willingly we carry out our responsibilities as citizens in a democratic society....

"In order to maintain the fairness of our elections, we have established spending limits. We have them, among other reasons, so that well-funded special interests cannot determine the outcome of elections, so that big money cannot buy an election. We have campaign spending limits so that one party cannot gain an unfair advantage by flooding the airwaves with advertising to the point that the other parties and other perspectives are unable to compete. I believe these limits are necessary and in the public interest"—and I support them.

"We believe, and we assert, that the Ontario Liberal Party has attempted to gain such unfair advantage through an alliance with the so-called Working Families Coalition. In the last two provincial elections, the Working Families Coalition has funded multi-million-dollar ad campaigns attacking the Ontario PC Party, its leaders and its candidates, we believe to the direct benefit of the Ontario Liberal Party. We suspect they'll do it again this fall if given the chance.

I went on to say that "these organizations have every right to participate in the election, and their members individually have every right to support whoever they want. But do they have the right to collude with one political party, coordinating their advertising to support that political party, to get around the campaign spending limits that the other parties must obey by law? I submit that they do not."

1500

To be clear, we do not oppose the principle of the government's Bill 196. Voter suppression tactics of any kind are not acceptable, and there's no place for that kind of dishonesty in Ontario politics. At the same time, however, we do take issue with the government's apparent belief that there has been an epidemic of corruption in our elections that would require a bill of this kind. If this government were actually serious about ensuring the fairness of our elections, they would amend their bill to include the substance of my Bill 195. That, more than anything else, would give this government some much-needed credibility on this issue. It would show that it's actually serious about playing by the same rules as the other parties must observe.

In my remarks on Bill 195, I said that for the Liberal Party to be able to get around those spending limits would for them be hugely advantageous. Through their votes against Bill 195, the Liberals sent a very clear signal to voters that there are in fact links between Working Families and Ontario Liberals. That, we suggest, amounts to collusion. Any fair-minded person looking at the weak arguments presented by the member for Willowdale on May 19 would draw the same conclusion.

Fortunately, this government has extended itself another chance to get it right. So I call upon the government members to amend Bill 196 to include our anti-collusion measures. If they did that, I think they would find the official opposition inclined to support them. If they don't do that, if they continue to turn a blind eye to collusion in electoral advertising—or, worse, encourage it behind the scenes—people will continue to ask, "What

do they have to hide?" Again, we need to remember that this issue goes beyond Working Families and what we believe may well be their efforts to collude with the Liberal Party in 2011. The issue goes far beyond that. Fairness requires us to consider all external organizations with undue capacity to influence the outcome of elections, not only in 2011 but beyond. The people of Ontario rightly expect us to uphold the highest standards of fairness. They expect all parties to obey the law, to obey it in letter as well as in spirit. They expect the same of individuals, be they elections officials or individual campaign volunteers.

Again, we do not oppose the principle of Bill 196. It's just unfortunate that the government's approach appears to be a partisan approach, as we saw in their decision to defeat Bill 195. Yes, we must reject voter suppression, dishonesty and corruption of all kinds during elections. Behaviour of that kind must be condemned and the law must be upheld. But fairness also demands that we close the loopholes, especially those benefiting special interests and one political party—namely, the Ontario Liberal Party. That's what the people expect of us. That's why they're calling on us and why we're calling on this government to amend its bill, to strengthen it by including our anti-collusion measures.

Just to reiterate, I think it's important to point out that on May 19 this Legislature debated Bill 195, An Act to amend the Election Finances Act to ban collusion in electoral advertising. During that debate, the member from Willowdale made some interesting remarks. He said that Bill 195 was, in his opinion, "just a fuzzy piece of legislation, brought in a political year as we're approaching a political and obvious election." The member continued, "I say at best it's confusing, or mischievous and redundant."

My question to the member for Willowdale, which remains unanswered, is, was he describing my Bill 195 or was he actually describing his own government's legislation, Bill 196, which we are debating today? We know that Bill 196 could well be considered a confusing, mischievous and redundant effort to distract the public from the Liberals' own—and I'll say it again until you support it—electoral mischief-making and their shameful vote on May 19 against my Bill 195, which would have gone a long way towards putting an end to collusion in advertising during election campaigns.

They rejected my sensible bill. Instead, they rushed ahead with Bill 196, introduced the very next day after my bill, which was designed to be little more than a smokescreen. They tried to distract the public from Bill 195 so that their friends in the Working Families Coalition would continue their plan of unfettered advertising, only limited by the funds they extract from the membership of the unions and organizations comprising the coalition. Perhaps the Liberals thought they needed to shield the Working Families Coalition, its dubious advertising campaigns and the Liberal Party itself from Bill 195, but it's clear that they believe that they shouldn't have been constrained by campaign spending limits

designed to create a level playing field for all political parties.

Working Families and other so-called third parties now have no limits on the amount they can spend to support or attack a particular candidate or party during an election. Parties, on the other hand, are limited to total campaign spending of approximately \$8 million a year in the case of an election, according to the Canadian Press.

I want to return to the member for Willowdale, who unfortunately isn't in the chamber at the present time, who complained that Bill 195 did not contain a definition section—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I'd ask you to withdraw that comment. I'd ask you to withdraw the reference to the person's—

Mr. Ted Arnott: That the member from Willowdale is not in the chamber?

Interjections.

Mr. Ted Arnott: Oh, he's—I do withdraw. I'm glad he's here. I hope that he'll respond to the comments that I make in the opportunity they will have when there's a two-minute reply.

The member for Willowdale complained that Bill 195 did not contain a definition section. It would have been impossible to enforce, he said. But reading the government's Bill 196, it would appear that it, too, lacks a definition section. It sets out specific fines for those guilty of a so-called corrupt practice, yet the bill makes no mention of collusion in advertising designed to skirt our election spending limits. Many people would consider that to be one of the most unfair practices of all, yet this bill makes no mention of collusion in advertising. It avoids the issue altogether.

The member for Willowdale also claimed incredibly during the course of that debate that "collusion and implied hanky-panky going on behind the scenes" are already dealt with. But that's at odds with the facts, and the member, who is a member of the bar, likely knows that. He should have known that, had he listened to the Ontario Chief Electoral Officer on May 7, 2009, when he testified before the Select Committee on Elections. The member for Willowdale has been a member of that committee, so the member for Willowdale of all people should know that Mr. Greg Essensa, the Chief Electoral Officer, told the committee that he believes that a review and update of Ontario's election finance laws is warranted. He also explained that, under current law, third parties are free to co-operate and coordinate their efforts with recognized parties. I quote Mr. Essensa's remarks from Hansard: "There is no specific provision that prohibits a third party from co-operating or coordinating its advertising with either a political party or one of its candidates, provided that the party/candidate is not actually controlling the third party's advertising." Based on Mr. Essensa's testimony, it would appear that the member for Willowdale was flatly wrong when he said that collusion was already dealt with.

Mr. Essensa also tells us that there are already more stringent requirements in place federally, in British Col-

umbia, in New Brunswick and in Quebec, and that there were also regulations being proposed in Alberta at the time of the testimony, that being in 2009. Again I quote Mr. Essensa's testimony from Hansard: "It is, or will be, an offence in these jurisdictions to collude for the purposes of circumventing spending limits for political parties, candidates and third parties."

With my Bill 195, the McGuinty government had a real and genuine opportunity to show that it was serious about strengthening our elections law to ensure fairness and transparency in our provincial election campaigns. Unfortunately, the Liberals rejected that opportunity, choosing instead to follow their own selfish political agenda and political self-interests—in essence, turning a blind eye to collusion in electoral advertising as long as it benefits them. So instead of addressing a very real threat to the fairness of our elections and instead of ensuring that our democracy is on a level playing with other parties, the McGuinty Liberals have instead decided to go after something that they apparently feel is a much bigger political threat, and they of course brought in this bill to do that.

But why has the McGuinty government decided to target our poll clerks, our returning officers and our dedicated elections staff and volunteers? Do the Liberals genuinely believe that there is an epidemic of corruption on the part of those who count our ballots? These are the people who, notwithstanding their own political views and notwithstanding sometimes difficult circumstances, are in almost every case dedicated, committed, patriotic people who believe in fairness. For the McGuinty Liberals to make these people the issue at a time when our procedures, our checks and balances, and our democratic traditions have long been established—it seems to me that Bill 196 is just a desperate attempt to muddy the waters in the days leading up to the debate on my Bill 195.

In my remarks on May 19, I noted that we as Canadians rightly value—indeed, we treasure—our democratic rights. Willingly we carry out our responsibilities as citizens of a democratic society. In order to maintain the fairness of our elections, we have established spending limits. We have them, among other reasons, so that well-funded special interests cannot determine the outcome of our elections, so that big money cannot buy an election.

1510

We have campaign spending limits so that one party cannot gain an unfair advantage by flooding the airways with advertising to the point that the other parties and other perspectives are unable to compete. I believe that these limits are necessary and that they are in the public interest.

We believe and we assert that the Ontario Liberal Party has attempted to gain an unfair advantage through its alliance with the so-called Working Families Coalition. In the last two provincial elections, the Working Families Coalition has funded multi-million-dollar ad campaigns attacking the Ontario PC Party, its leaders and its candidates, we believe to the direct benefit of the

Ontario Liberal Party. We suspect and believe that they will do it again this fall if given the chance.

I went on to say that these organizations have every right to participate in the elections, and their members, individually, have the right to support whoever they want. But do they have the right to collude with one political party, coordinating their advertising to support that political party to get around the campaign spending limits that the other parties must observe by law? I submit again that they do not.

To be clear, we do not oppose the principle of the government's Bill 196. Voter suppression tactics of any kind are not acceptable. There's no place for that kind of dishonesty in Ontario politics. At the same time, however, we do take issue with the government's apparent belief that there is some sort of an epidemic of corruption in our elections that would require a bill of this kind.

If this government were actually serious about ensuring the fairness of elections, they would amend their bill to include the substance of Bill 195. That, more than anything, would give the government the much-needed credibility that it lacks on this issue. It would show that it's actually serious about playing by the same rules that the other parties must observe.

In my remarks on Bill 195, I said that for the Liberal Party to be able to get around those spending limits would, for them, be hugely advantageous. Through their votes against Bill 195, the Liberals sent a very clear signal to voters that there are, in fact, links between Working Families and the Ontario Liberals. That, we suggest, amounts to collusion. Any fair-minded person looking at the weak arguments presented by the member for Willowdale when my bill was defeated would draw the same conclusion. Fortunately, this government has extended itself another chance to get it right. I now call upon the government to amend Bill 196 to include our anti-collusion measures. If they did that, I think they would find that the official opposition is inclined to support them on this bill. If they don't do it, if they continue to turn a blind eye to collusion in electoral advertising that they in fact may be encouraging and involved with, people will continue to ask, what do they have to hide?

Again, we need to remember that this issue goes beyond Working Families and what we believe may well be their efforts to collude with the Liberal Party in 2011. The issue goes far beyond that. Fairness requires us to consider all external organizations with undue capacity to influence the outcome of elections, not only in 2011 but beyond.

The people of Ontario rightly expect us to uphold the highest standards of fairness. They expect all parties to obey the law, to obey it in letter as well as in spirit. They expect the same of individuals, be they elections officials or individual campaign volunteers or the members of the Legislature who are so privileged to serve here.

Again, we do not oppose the principle of Bill 196. It's just unfortunate that the government's approach appears to be a partisan approach, as we saw in their decision to

reject Bill 195. Yes, we must reject voter suppression, dishonesty and corruption. Behaviour of that kind must be condemned and the law must be upheld. But fairness also demands that we close loopholes, especially those benefiting one political party and the special interests that support them. That's what the people expect of us and that's why we're calling upon the government again to amend its bill and to strengthen it by including our anti-collusion measures. If they don't do that, the people will want to know why. Ultimately, I'm confident that the voters will hold this government and this Liberal Party accountable on October 6.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member for Leeds—Grenville.

Mr. Steve Clark: I'm so pleased to have the opportunity, and I'm glad that the member for Wellington—Halton Hills gave me the opportunity to share his time as we talk about Bill 196.

I want to commend him. I had the opportunity to speak in the chamber on May 19 regarding his bill, Bill 195. I have to tell you: Many of his points that were brought up today were extremely important. I know that I was very disappointed that this government came forward and hammered down Bill 195 because I believe we had an opportunity to do some good.

Here we're talking about this bill; there are about 16 or 17 of us here in the chamber. People at home must wonder what the heck is going on here. We're talking about two bills brought in about a day apart from each other; from a public perspective, both talk about providing fairness. They must really wonder what the heck we're thinking in this place.

We've got a couple of days left. We do have an opportunity to do some good work, to have some co-operation among the three parties. I think the member for Wellington—Halton Hills brings up an extremely good point: that we have an opportunity to bring the good from Bills 195 and 196 forward.

I mentioned during the debate on the 19th that I was at the Canadian Club, sitting at the back, listening to Premier McGuinty speak at his event on Friday, April 15. There was one thing that I agreed with him on: He mentioned that the beauty of a true democracy is the fact that the people are always right. When they're behind that ballot box and have the opportunity to cast their vote, that's when true democracy takes place. So you want to have, as a government, legislation behind that democracy that is fair and even for all. Again, I want to commend Mr. Arnott, the member for Wellington—Halton Hills, for bringing forward his debate and also talking about some of the issues that came forward that day.

The Attorney General: You could almost put the start of his speech behind music. It was almost like a public service announcement, a call to arms of wanting to vote, the importance of voting and the importance of exercising your right—

Mr. Peter Kormos: Very Liberal: Vote early and vote often.

Mr. Steve Clark: As the member from Welland notes: Absolutely.

The other issue that the Attorney General mentioned was that the goal of Bill 196 was to have, I think his words were, the "best election law possible" to ensure that there were stronger penalties, to make the law stronger. I think the same could be said for Mr. Arnott's bill, Bill 195.

We all have election stories—provincial, municipal and federal. I'll get to some of those federal stories. But I can remember, as a young person who decided to run for municipal office, granted, and not knowing any of the laws, going into the clerk's office just hours before nominations closed in 1982 and quickly reading the laws.

In those days, I had to get 10 signatures, and I remember having these large electoral books for the three wards in Brockville and taking them to a nearby refreshment establishment and going through them and making sure that—I think at the time I had to have the signature of 10 electors. We made sure we had 11; we wanted to make sure that we had a little room to spare.

Mr. Peter Kormos: You took them to a beer hall.

Mr. Steve Clark: Absolutely. I think I got asked that night by the local newspaper about my platform, which I didn't have at the time. I certainly didn't have a wonderful Changebook that I could give people on the campaign trail that provided them relief and a guarantee for the programs that they expect while rooting out fraud and waste in the system.

But I gave it a lot of thought, and I remember, being a student just having graduated from university, that I decided to have a brochure. I attended a little shop. It was a taxi stand and a place where he did passport photos. He took my picture for my campaign brochure, and his camera didn't really like my glasses, so he actually gave me a set of glasses with no lenses in them. He took this picture of me, and that was on my 80 or 100 brochures. I got 10 lawn signs, and we knocked on doors from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. We wanted to make sure that we adhered to all the laws. This is a true story, not like some of the other innuendo and allegations that have been thrown out with this bill.

1520

One of the things that I found out partway through the campaign—this is an interesting story—is that there was a document called a Vernon's directory. I think it cost about \$300 at the time, and it listed all the people and it had a reverse telephone. It didn't have any of those technology issues that have been discussed. It wasn't a demon dialler; there wasn't the Internet in those days, back in 1982. This was just a true book. I didn't have the \$300 to buy it, so we went to the library. I remember getting caught by Margaret Williams, who's now just retired as chief librarian at the Brockville library, saying, "You can't photocopy that. That's against copyright laws. You can only photocopy up to 10%." So within an hour, I managed to mobilize about 11 friends, and we pumped that photocopier full of quarters and had our Vernon's directory that we used as our manifesto for that election. It's funny.

During my provincial election, my by-election, many, many years later, last March, when we were out cam-

painging, I actually decided—and again, I checked all the election laws, made sure that I adhered to everything that was in black and white—to tour the polls on election day. I didn't wear blue; I didn't have any buttons. I walked in, I greeted the poll workers, thanked them for their work and left. At one point during the day, my campaign manager called me—this was just last year during the provincial by-election. I understood that the Liberal Party had put in a complaint against me during the election. They actually called Elections Ontario and registered a complaint, not that I was breaking any laws—I wasn't breaking any laws—but that I was being too nice. That was actually a complaint that was put in: I was being too nice in the polls. Strange, but true.

Federally, just this last election, there were some stories that were brought up, so I'll share my federal election story. One Saturday morning, my wife looked out and thought it was strange on a Saturday that our sign, our sign for Mr. Brown, our Conservative candidate in Leeds–Grenville, our MP—he's been our MP for seven years—was crooked a little bit on the front lawn. So I went out to my front lawn to pull that sign out, and you know what it was? It was actually a Green Party sign. Someone had come, yanked my sign out and tried to put a Green Party sign on my front lawn. It was the only sign changed on the whole street.

Because I didn't want to break any laws, I made sure I gingerly placed it by the side of my house, made sure that the sign folks from that Conservative campaign called the Green Party and gave them back their sign, and we were able to put our sign back. There wasn't any great furor; there wasn't any front-page news; there wasn't any press release or any email from any parties alleging there was any wrongdoing. It was simply replaced, given back for them to put on another lawn, and another sign for my chosen candidate, our MP, was placed back.

There are lots of stories that we can talk about for elections, municipally, federally and provincially. But I think we all agree in the chamber that ultimately the legislation that's going to govern how we as candidates operate and how third parties operate has to be fair. We had the chance two Thursdays ago with Mr. Arnott's Bill 195 to do that, and as he said earlier today, we have an opportunity to perhaps make Bill 196 stronger by recognizing some of the good points that were in Bill 195.

To try to quote from the Attorney General, he said something—and I'm paraphrasing; it's not a direct quote—that it's based on rumours, and rumours are only that. It's based on allegations, and allegations are only that. It's based on innuendo, and innuendo is only that. As we talked about, the bill that we proposed, the bill that was presented a day before Bill 196, the bill that the member for Willowdale called “fuzzy,” “redundant,” “mischievous” and whatever, was based on the Chief Electoral Officer. It was based on the need for some changes.

If you want to talk about mischievous, mischievous is the email that the Liberal Party sent out May 17, where

they actually tried to talk about “American-style dirty tricks in the federal election.” This email from your party claimed that it was “by federal Conservatives.” They touted in the email that they're introducing tough new legislation that will mean stiff penalties and jail time if anyone breaks the rules during Ontario's elections. The email:

“Here's what you need to know:

“It will be illegal for anyone to give voters false information or impersonate a candidate, campaign worker or an Elections Ontario official.

“Those caught breaking the law will be fined up to \$25,000 and get nearly two years in jail.” Then they go on and try to smear our leader, Ontario PC leader Tim Hudak.

When you talk about stories and innuendo and allegations, there's your email. There's what you did as a party to try to promote Bill 196. You should be ashamed of yourselves.

When we had the discussion about Mr. Arnott's bill to try to make some real changes, you couldn't do it.

You talk about issues in the federal campaign. I've read the Globe and Mail story from Jill Mahoney: “Joe Volpe Turfs Campaign Worker Caught Trashing Green Pamphlets.” That wasn't Stephen Harper; that was the Liberal Party and the Green Party. It says right here. It goes through the whole story.

Interjection.

Mr. Steve Clark: I don't know what they're doing over there.

Clearly, when you read the story, it talks about the fact that a campaign worker was dismissed and, in fact, as part of the canvass, that brochures were removed from mailboxes and replaced with federal Liberal Party pamphlets.

As part of the comments and questions, perhaps the parliamentary assistant would like to address that, whether this is the type of dirty tricks—this is the story or the innuendo or the allegation that you're trying to address. So I hope that one of the baker's dozen across the floor will provide that clarity. I think it's very important, because if you don't, then stories are only that. Innuendo is only that. It's very clear with the legislation. Our legislation was talking about the Chief Electoral Officer.

I'm going to take the opportunity to read a few quotes that I believe are pertinent regarding the Working Families Coalition as regards the original appeal to Elections Ontario that our party provided. According to the Elections Ontario report, which was prepared by the law firm of Torys LLP, Dalton McGuinty's former chief of staff, Don Guy, the Liberal campaign director in 2003 and 2007 and now in 2011, was among the senior party members to meet with Working Families. Let me quote:

“While we have concluded that the Working Families Coalition was ‘independent’ of the Ontario Liberal Party within the parameters of control and agency ... the WFC's use of consultants with known Liberal connections who were simultaneously providing services both to the WFC and the OLP and, where the very person run-

ning the OLP campaign, Don Guy, is president of the polling research firm hired by the WFC”—get this—“certainly constitutes, in our view, grounds for [the] concern which warranted this investigation.”

Let’s talk about what Chief Electoral Officer Greg Essensa said in 2009. Here’s a quote:

“The fourth public policy area for consideration is, should Ontario adopt stricter registration and anti-collusion provisions? Under the Election Finances Act, there is no specific provision that prohibits a third party from co-operating or coordinating its advertising with either a political party or one of its candidates, provided that the party/candidate is not actually controlling the third party’s” agency.

1530

Furthermore, the Torsys report, commissioned by Elections Ontario, says, “The third party advertising regime is new to Ontario. The first election under the regime disclosed a number of rough edges, particularly in circumstances where there is potential for conflicts of interest/collusion between registered parties and third parties.”

That’s not a story. That’s not an allegation. That’s not innuendo. That’s the Chief Electoral Officer, who placed that concern clearly on the table in 2009. This wasn’t something that happened as part of the May 2 federal election. It wasn’t a story from the federal campaign trail. It wasn’t a mischievous email that was sent out by the Liberal Party. This was the Chief Electoral Officer, talking about deficiencies in the system, things that needed to be changed.

Mr. Vic Dhillon: Making it up.

Mr. Steve Clark: He’s not making it up, member opposite.

Interjection: It’s in Hansard, so we’re not making it up.

Mr. Steve Clark: Unlike some of the debate from the Attorney General, we definitely aren’t making it up. Mr. Dhillon can have his own comments and put them on the record later.

I would like to talk just very briefly about the penalties that are in this legislation, section 92 of the act. I know there was discussion when my colleague from Wellington-Halton Hills brought it up, when he referenced deputy returning officers and poll clerks. He is absolutely correct: Section 92 in this bill says:

“Wilful miscount of ballots

“92. Every deputy returning officer or poll clerk who wilfully miscounts the ballots or otherwise wilfully makes up a false statement of the poll is guilty of a corrupt practice and is liable to a fine of not more than \$25,000 or to imprisonment for a term of not more than two years less a day, or to both.”

Just to let you know, if this legislation passes, the way you’re targeting poll clerks and deputy returning officers—under a Tim Hudak PC government, those terrible criminals will have to clean graffiti and rake leaves along highways and pick up trash. They’d be required to do that

up to 40 hours a week, not watch premium cable or high-definition channels.

I know that the Minister of Community Safety expressed a concern about criminals in neighbourhoods. We’re talking about penalties to this act.

The public service announcement that the Attorney General presented as the opening bid was extremely nice. He could have done the same speech, I suggest, on Thursday, May 19, for Mr. Arnott’s bill, because many of the things he spoke on were stories, whereas Mr. Arnott presented his bill based on actual concerns from the Chief Electoral Officer. It just shows how out of touch the Attorney General is with this bill and that there is political motivation on their side. Clearly, the email sent out the day this bill was presented proves that, as well as the comments from government members on May 19 for Mr. Arnott’s bill. If we’re truly going to get this bill passed and go through the process in the last three days, you could have done better.

I want to quote the Attorney General from earlier this afternoon—it’s actually a long quote, so I’ll ask you to bear with me—when he referred to the existing Election Act: “You take a look at the legislation and this conduct which was alleged, which was rumoured, which was spoken about, in some cases by those sitting beside others receiving calls, and this conduct wasn’t specifically addressed. So you look around for other places. Could it be covered by the Criminal Code? Well, there are provisions in the Criminal Code that can address some of it. There are provisions in the Criminal Code that might be able to be used to address this. Those provisions have a history, have a purpose, have a reason that they were placed in there, and their implementation has been the result of many, many decades of use and interpretation by the courts. They’ve acquired a judicial history, a case history that in some instances makes it challenging to apply to the type of allegation that’s made in 2011 and might need to be used, might need to be the subject of legislative sanction.”

If I took that quote and put it into Hansard, it could very easily have been made by the Liberal government the afternoon of May 19, when Mr. Arnott’s bill came forward. It could have applied so much, not just to what the Attorney General was talking about with his own bill, but chapter and verse to the other one as well.

The Chief Electoral Officer specifically said that the law was not strong enough. This is a far more powerful statement than what the Attorney General called stories; he talked about rumours, allegation and innuendo by unnamed sources. That’s not what the Chief Electoral Officer put on the record. According to Mr. Essensa, the existing provisions of the Election Finances Act are inadequate to ban collusion between political parties and third parties.

If the Attorney General took his own advice and looked for other places where it could be addressed—for example, the Criminal Code—the provisions there, quoting the Attorney General this afternoon again, “have a history, have a purpose, have a reason that they were

placed in there, and their implementation has been the result of many, many decades of use and interpretation by the courts. They've acquired a judicial history, a case history that in some instances makes it challenging to apply to the type of allegation that's made in 2011...."

Again, the question you have is: Why do the McGuinty Liberals vote against banning collusion by third parties for the purpose of circumventing advertising limits? Why would they talk one way in the Legislature one day, and then change their minds? If they are truly motivated by a desire to improve election fairness with this bill, like they say they want to, why don't they sit down with us as three parties, decide that we're going to ban collusion, that we're going to set limits that apply to everyone that make this a fair bill for all parties, make the playing field known to them? It just doesn't make sense.

1540

I was so pleased to have the opportunity, along with the member for Nepean–Carleton, to speak on Thursday regarding Bill 195. Because if you're sitting at home and you're watching us and you're saying to yourself, "Why isn't Mr. Arnott's bill a good idea"—some of the sections are right out of Mr. Essensa's recommendations, adding clauses, for example, that state: "A statement that, in engaging in third party election advertising, the third party is acting independently of and not in collusion with a registered party, a constituency association or a candidate." Who would oppose that? If you really sit down and think about the intent of the legislation and the intent of what we're talking about, why wouldn't you vote for that?

If you look at the Working Families Coalition—and I have spoken to a number of folks in my riding on the street. Some people haven't met our leader, Tim Hudak, before. There are some that haven't met him. They look at that ad—they don't know the ad. They don't know what meeting is being talked about. They don't understand the slant of that advertising.

Clearly, we're not talking about rumours along the election campaign. We're not talking about a prank of taking a sign down on somebody's lawn and adding another one or taking a brochure out of a mailbox. We're talking about collusion between political parties. When the election official says that the law needs to be strengthened, that the loophole needs to be stopped—you look at Hansard on the 19th and you look at those three bills that were presented that day. The member for Glengarry–Prescott–Russell presented a bill, Bill 153, An Act to amend the Municipal Elections Act. When that bill was brought in, there was a mistake. They moved the election date up, but they didn't move the start date. It was a mistake. Everyone in the chamber recognized that it needed to be fixed. We came together, it passed second reading, and I'm sure the government that will take over will consider that change prior to the municipal election.

I brought up another issue that came up with people not filing their expenses and having to spend \$3,000, \$4,000, whatever the case may be, going to a judge and

getting brought back, being that the judge would reinstate them as a member. We're going to find pieces of legislation that have loopholes or changes that need to be made before the next election. Mr. Essensa, in his 2009 report, talked about a loophole from the 2007 election that needed to be fixed. Mr. Arnott very appropriately brings that forward for discussion. The Attorney General—again, stories are just stories. Innuendo is innuendo. If you truly wanted to move forward and provide a bill that the three parties, I think—and I could be wrong. You are going to all have your chance to make your comments—two minutes, an hour, whatever the case may be—on the bill.

I think we do have an opportunity in these last three and a half, four days to make changes that people at home would sit back and say, "Yeah, we understand that. We need to strengthen our laws. We need to make them fair. We need to establish limits. We need to stop collusion. We need to stop fraud. We need to stop people from providing these tricks, from making these funny calls, from dealing in election fraud." I don't think anyone in this chamber has an issue with that. But let's stop talking about redundant, mischievous—let's cut the crap. Let's sit down and take Bill 195, Bill 196, take the time here, rather than sitting until midnight every night, and let's make the changes.

Mr. Arnott, in his address on the 19th, talked about his wife, who's a teacher, who obviously supports him. However, some of the unions have decided to take money out of people's pockets with the express purpose, in his riding's case, to defeat him. In my riding's case, it's the same way. The average person can't understand that. They think it's wrong. They think there need to be some rules to prevent that. What we tried to do here in our party is to put that forward. The NDP talked about it as well and generally supported it. They certainly don't get the money from these types of campaigns.

We've come a long way since I remember knocking on doors as a 22-year-old, buying 10 signs and having a little bit of a hokey brochure, with funny glasses. But the principle is still there. When you put your name on a ballot and you knock on a door and you offer people support, you expect that everybody is going to play it straight. I don't think anyone in this room argues that it shouldn't be straight.

Mr. Arnott and our party believe that we can strengthen this bill if you listen to us, if you listen to the Chief Electoral Officer.

I think that the Attorney General, while he voices a good PSA, while he rallies the troops and rallies the 17 members in the chamber—people of Ontario expect better. They expect that we can sit down and that we can work on a bill that provides balance, that strengthens laws, that closes loopholes, that provides something that we can all be proud of in the last days of our sitting in the Legislative Assembly.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Comments and questions?

Mr. Peter Kormos: I listened carefully to the comments by both of the Conservative members.

I'm going to be speaking to this bill next. I suspect I'm going to use the hour that's allowed me.

The debate has turned rather sombre, and that's maybe entirely appropriate, because in many respects it's a very unfortunate debate. The debate around this particular bill, this modest bill, says so much about what has become wronger and wronger about this Legislative chamber and the process that is imposed on us here, in most cases most unwelcomely.

Look, let's not kid ourselves. The Arnott bill will not eliminate the capacity of the Working Families Coalition to campaign against any particular political party that they choose.

I want to talk about the impact of the Arnott bill. The Arnott bill will simply affect the issue of collusion.

It was amazing that there were some smart people in this Legislature saying, "I don't know what 'collusion' means." As a matter of fact, one of that member's own colleagues said, "I'll tell what you I did: I looked it up in the dictionary." What an enlightened thing to do. What a tremendous start to understanding what the word means.

We learned a little bit about some of the Volpe scandals, and I have been reminded of that one. Then we of course heard from the member for Brampton West, who heckled his way into the debate, somehow wanting to align himself with Volpe, rather than engaging in the kind of—and perhaps when we get back to the responses, because as I recall, during one Joe Volpe's leadership bid there was some very stinky stuff going on, and allegations and some concerns about significant corruption.

1550

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further comments and questions?

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I'm pleased to comment on the debate on Bill 195, and I would point out that, although you would never know it if you are listening, this is a debate on Bill 195—

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Bill 196.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: On Bill 196. See, even I'm confused, because these guys are stuck two weeks in the past. They're stuck on something that has already been defeated. What we need to focus on is Bill 196, because Bill 196—

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: You voted against it.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I wasn't here when you were debating 195; be quiet.

What does amaze me in all of this was that somehow the member from Wellington-Halton Hills thinks that his bill is the centre of the world.

I would like to talk about the federal election, which I really think is much more pertinent, because when you look at what happened on May 2, some things went seriously awry in my riding and many others.

On May 3, the Liberal members in their caucus meeting—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Order.

Go ahead.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: They discussed the matter of election fraud and voter suppression, which the members

opposite apparently think is some sort of rumour. Later, I will talk about the fact that it wasn't. And then there was the matter of amazing processing speed, because a policy went to cabinet, it went to legislation and regulations, and within two weeks we were tabling a bill to stop election fraud and make sure my constituents know where to go to vote without somebody impersonating Elections Canada. I think that's a serious matter.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further comments?

Mr. Norm Miller: I'm pleased to have an opportunity to have a comment on the debate on Bill 196 and the speeches from the members from Wellington-Halton Hills and Leeds-Grenville. I note that the member from Guelph made reference to Bill 195. That's the bill we should be talking about: the member from Wellington-Halton Hills' private member's bill, which really did deal with more substantive issues, and that was the issue of the Working Families Coalition and their collusion with the Liberal Party of Ontario. Really, the reason it's dealing with more substantive issues is that it's giving an unfair advantage to the Liberal Party, where they would spend some \$5 million to \$10 million on nasty advertising.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: You've already seen it.

Mr. Norm Miller: I saw one of the ads last night as I was watching the news. The reason it's unfair is that it's outside of Elections Ontario rules and it's money that the other parties won't be spending. Most other provinces have rules about this. They have rules about third party advertising and limits on it—\$200,000 or \$300,000 in total, and requirements to report that. I think that's fair, because then it's a level playing field where all parties are spending the same money. One party is not buying an election based on being able to spend lots more money than the other parties, and that's the situation we have in Ontario right now. The government used its majority to whip the vote and defeat Bill 195, An Act to amend the Election Finances Act to ban collusion in electoral advertising, because obviously they have this unfair advantage, so why would they want to deal with this very real situation? But if you want to have fair elections in Ontario, you'd bring in rules to do with third party advertising. Sadly, in Ontario we don't have those rules, so we have an unfair situation.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member from Hamilton East-Stoney Creek.

Mr. Paul Miller: I'd like to thank the members from Wellington-Halton Hills and also Leeds-Grenville for their comments.

Accusations, fabrications and hearsay run rampant in elections, whether they're municipal, provincial or federal. My question is: How is this bill going to distinguish between truth or fabrication? How is it going to be enforced? How many resources will be required to uncover, prove and prosecute individuals under the act?

I, for one, am in favour of any reform that will improve the legality and the honesty of the election process, but I have my doubts. I'll tell you why: because over the

years, I've watched many, many, many elections, whether it's municipal, provincial or federal, and some parties—I won't mention any one in particular—will even fabricate things against themselves to say that the other party had done it, whether it be filling a dumpster with signs of their own, saying that the other party did it, or there's someone in the election polling booth that votes Liberal and they're Liberal-leaning, and they may have done something that's questionable. I've seen these things happen 100 times over the years, and has anyone really been prosecuted? No.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: Oh, but it's a big deal now.

Mr. Paul Miller: But now, all of a sudden, after a federal election where one particular party got bad results, they come out and say, "Well, we've got to have all of this reform now to protect us in the fall." Why didn't they do it four years ago? Why didn't they do it eight years ago?

With all due respect, these things come up—the timing is just unbelievable of how these things come up. The last week before we break, they come up with this thing that wasn't even supposed to be on the books, and it comes out because they're worried that somebody might do something illegal. They might want to look in their backyards, because their record isn't exactly stellar in the last elections I've seen.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member for Leeds—Grenville has two minutes to respond.

Mr. Steve Clark: I want to thank the members for Welland, Guelph, Parry Sound—Muskoka and Hamilton East—Stoney Creek for their comments and statements on the floor.

I want to go back to something that my friend the member for Wellington—Halton Hills said at the very start. The government opposite had indicated to us that there were no pieces of legislation that were coming forward. Yet, within one day of Mr. Arnott presenting Bill 195, this government tables Bill 196.

Fact: The only reason that this item is on the agenda—the story, the innuendo, the allegation—is because of this man right here. This man right in front of me tabled that bill to provide a level playing field in our elections, to take what Greg Essensa, the Chief Electoral Officer of Ontario, says needed to be done. He put it on the floor, and the government opposite not only put this bill—even after they said that there was nothing else on the table, even though they said, "We're done with legislation; there's none left to come." The minute our bill gets put on the table, their bill gets put on the table. They voted down our bill, and we have this debate today talking about stories and innuendo and allegations.

Again, the question you have to ask is, why are the McGuinty Liberals voting against—or had voted against, on May 19—banning collusion and circumventing limits? If they are truly motivated and have the desire to improve things, wake up and do both.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Peter Kormos: First, just to put this in context about what's going to happen during the course of this

debate, this is a second reading debate. That means that rather than examining the minutiae of the bill, one talks about the broad principle—the very broad, broad principle—of the bill. This is a bill, of course, that amends the Election Act with respect to certain electoral practices, which opens up the discussion to electoral practices. Then it further goes to talk about corrupt practices, which means that it extends and expands the conversation to one of corrupt practices, and that means that a discussion of Bill 195 is entirely relevant and parliamentary and necessary.

People are telling war stories, and not inappropriately, about their political activities. The first election campaign I worked on was in 1965. I was 13 years old. I haven't missed one since. Even this weekend, I was over at the Conservative convention down at the Toronto Congress Centre. I pulled in there on Saturday, and I saw these really wild-looking kids with green hair and yellow hair and costumes, and I thought, "There's surely some stoners in there to boot." It was just impossible not to be the case. And I thought, "By God, the Conservative Party has changed since the last time we attended one of their conventions." That was the John Tory leadership convention down in London two or three years ago.

1600

These kids were not necessarily Tories. Not to say they weren't; I'm not sure. They were at their own convention; it was an anime convention. I went and talked to the registration desk—I was intrigued. These young people were at the registration desk—mostly young people; in any event, much younger than me. These are fans of those highly stylized Japanese cartoon-making and cartoon films.

Pokémon apparently is one of the characters. So you had people there dressed up like Pokémon, and they were posing, because people wanted to take photographs. They wouldn't just stand there like those old-fashioned, old-country grandparent photographs. They would actually go into their karate poses or their ninja poses and stuff. They'd fix this pose and hold it for the cameras. It was quite fun to watch and, quite frankly, more exciting than certain parts of the Conservative convention.

These kids—young people, not kids—were mostly from all over North America; 16,000, I'm told, which was 10 times the number at the Conservative convention. I'm told there's a broader comic convention downtown at the Metro Convention Centre, which draws an even bigger crowd, because it doesn't just deal with this highly stylized Japanese genre of cartoon but covers the whole gamut of Marvel cartoons and stuff like that. That would be much cooler because it would be downtown, right? At this convention, these people were out there, isolated in the Toronto Congress Centre. They'd be downtown interacting. Heck, many of them would look perfectly normal in downtown Toronto, and I say, God bless them. They were a delightful group of people, and I enjoyed talking to a couple of them and to their organizers, seeing as I had never seen anything like that before in my life, and I've seen a lot of things. I'm not suggesting I haven't

seen peculiar things before, but that wasn't peculiar. These were people having a good time.

It was peculiar, though, by the time I got to the north convention hall of the Toronto Congress Centre where the Tories were, because these people were engaging in their own political process, and I have a great deal of respect for that. As you know, opposing parties visit each other's conventions. It's not the first Conservative convention I've been to—I've been to a couple of Liberal ones—and we make generous comments about that party to the press, trying to be complimentary, I say sarcastically, about that party, but not wanting to overdo it because you don't want to detract from the fact that it's their day. So this weekend was the Tories' weekend.

You should know, though, because the Liberals have had a policy convention of some sort and the Tories had theirs this past weekend, that the New Democrats are having one in due course, and that's going to be exciting, because Andrea Horwath is going to talk about real solutions to real problems—affordable ones and practical ones and ones that work.

I don't see the Arnott legislation in the context of, as I say, Working Families. Working Families would exist even if Arnott's legislation became law. It simply wouldn't have the capacity to make connections, to have that nexus with the Ontario Liberal Party or the machine or the caucus and the Premier's office.

I'm concerned about how this legislation came forward. You heard it discussed here in the House, in response to ministerial statements on the day of first reading of this bill, that the government House leader was compromised by her own Premier's office. The government House leader, at the caucus meeting prior to introduction of this bill, government Bill 196, had firmly and clearly stated that there was no more government legislation coming forward, and I'm certain she believed that. She did not mislead us, because she didn't know otherwise.

There's a book that I know some of the members have read by Professor Frankfurt from Princeton University. He's a professor of moral philosophy there, and his book is on bull spit. What Professor Frankfurt does is he distinguishes between lying and bull-spitting by pointing out that when you're lying you know what the truth is and you choose not to tell it, but when you're merely bull-spitting, you're flying by the seat of your pants. You have no idea what you're talking about, but you want people to believe you anyway. I suppose I've seen a lot of both here in this chamber, but of course it's unparliamentary to indicate that somebody lied. But surely it's not unparliamentary to say that somebody bull-spitted. I've had occasion to do that numerous times without interjection by the Chair.

So here we are with legislation that we were told didn't exist, legislation that the government insists is non-partisan—and I agree with them.

I should indicate that New Democrats are going to support the bill.

This isn't how you introduce or process legislation that deals with elections. I recall the major amend-

ments—I believe they were major—to the Members' Integrity Act that were passed some time ago. That was a process whereby all three parties sat down, looked at the various proposals—in that instance, they came primarily from the Integrity Commissioner, then Coulter Osborne. We discussed them with our caucuses. We got some analysis by staff. That bill was developed collaboratively by all three parties and then passed in not quite a wink of an eye but pretty darn close. A bill like that has to be tripartite. It has to be non-partisan, and it shouldn't be anything less or more than that. I suggest to you that the election amendments have to fit into the same category and have the same standards.

Mr. Essensa has been quoted at length, particularly, if not only, with respect to his attendance before the Sorbara committee, the select committee struck by the Premier's office. Mr. McGuinty wanted a committee. Mr. Sorbara had time on his hands at the time, you'll recall. I'm sure he wanted something to do. Mr. McGuinty appointed Mr. Sorbara his election reform guru, his election reform czar. There was an effort by the government, as there always is, to make a little bit of fanfare and talk about how there was going to be a thorough review of elections and election funding here in the province of Ontario. I remember Mr. Sorbara chairing that. I remember the member for Willowdale, the parliamentary assistant to the Attorney General, sitting on that committee as the government member. The long-serving member for Carleton-Mississippi Mills was a Conservative representative. Howard Hampton, former leader of the Ontario New Democratic Party, the member from Kenora-Rainy River, was the New Democratic Party member of that committee. It was truly a tripartite committee, which became interesting in relatively short order because Mr. Sorbara then realized relatively quickly that the opposition could have control of the committee—one member from each opposition party and one member of the government and the Chair, of course, having no vote. I should indicate that the member for Kenora-Rainy River didn't attend one meeting. I acquiesced—I'm sure he takes great delight that he didn't have to attend those meetings. I take great delight that his name appears on the report rather than mine. We soon learned, however, that this wasn't about an open discussion about election reform or election finance reform. This was little more than a wish list by the Premier's office. Anything that wasn't on the Premier's office wish list wasn't going to be discussed; it wasn't going to form part of any legislation.

I acknowledged pretty quick—I said to the Chair, Mr. Sorbara, “Gosh, I guess I was naive to think that this is what the Premier's office said it was going to be.” Here I am, at my age and being here as long as I have, naive. Am I still naive? Of course. I was naive. I'm not saying we were misled. If I did, it would be unparliamentary, wouldn't it? But I sure as heck want to. I know I can't say it, but I want to so badly. It's pounding inside my head. It's on the tip of my tongue.

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The Premier's office said that this is going to be an open debate and discussion around real election reform.

Heck, the Conservative member was excited. He's been around here a long, long time. He's had a lot of ideas in his own right. The New Democrats were excited. You know what's interesting? Mr. Essensa appeared before the committee on several occasions, and it was mostly attendance by invitation only. It wasn't open. There was no ad put in the paper saying there's a committee discussing election reform. Sure enough, in the report of the committee, submitted by Chair Sorbara—here's his signature: Greg Sorbara, MPP, Chair, submitted to the Speaker of the House in June 2009.

On page 33, third party advertising—this doesn't come from Mr. Arnott's speech in support of his bill two Thursdays ago. It came from the Sorbara committee report, the Premier's man, his hand-picked fixer in this context. Page 33, third party advertising—it's not very long. I'm going to read it. It's important that this be on this record:

"Amendments made in 2007 to the Election Finances Act included new sections 37.1 to 37.13, which address third party advertising during an election period (i.e., beginning the day the writ for an election is issued and ending on polling day)."

Of course, let me interject: That has implications and ramifications for even the Arnott proposal because, as I said, the Arnott proposal would not end the Working Families Coalition and their advocacy for what they see as the interests of their members.

Back to the text of the Select Committee on Elections report:

"These provisions included the following requirements:

"—Third party advertisers spending more than \$500 on election advertising must register with the Chief Electoral Officer.

"—All registered third party advertisers must report on their expenses and contributions within six months of polling day.

"—Contributions made for third party advertising purposes in the period that begins two months prior to the issue of the writ and ends three months after polling day must be reported."

Those were the amendments made to the Election Finances Act back in 2007. It's not particularly onerous stuff, is it? It's pretty mild stuff. It's the bare bones. It doesn't control how much a third party can spend on advertising even during the writ period, and I'll get to that in a few minutes because that was discussed fecklessly and futilely by members of the committee.

The report by the select committee goes on:

"The 2007 general election was the first election to be held with these provisions in place."

The report then points out—very, very important. Please, Speaker, this is incredibly important:

"In his presentation to the committee on May 7, 2009, Chief Electoral Officer Greg Essensa identified the following issues for the committee's consideration:

"—Should Ontario adopt third party spending limits (following the lead of Canada, British Columbia and Quebec)?

"—Should Ontario adopt third party contribution limits?

"—Should Ontario attempt to limit third party advertising spending to the amounts a third party raises prior to and during an election?

"—Should Ontario adopt stricter registration and anti-collusion provisions?"

Interjection.

Mr. Peter Kormos: "I don't know what collusion means," he says. Please. The parliamentary assistant didn't say that when he approved the report. He was a signatory to the report. He signed off on it. If Mr. Sorbara was the Premier's man, the member for Willowdale was Sorbara's man.

I suspect the parliamentary assistant felt the same frustration that the Conservative member and I did. We thought this was going to be a pleasant experience. We thought that we were going to have some broad-ranging, freewheeling discussions about election and election finance reform, that we'd look at legislation from across Canada, maybe even beyond—no intention to travel, please; it's not necessary. But we soon figured out pretty quick that the Chair, Greg Sorbara, MPP, had his marching orders from the Premier's office, and any effort to use even the force of the majority was going to be futile. It simply wouldn't happen.

Now, back to the report. This is what the committee proposed:

"Proposal

"The committee considered the proposal that Ontario's electoral legislation

"26. Include provisions that apply to third party advertising similar to those in place in other Canadian jurisdictions."

Well, hallelujah. That committee wrote Mr. Arnott's bill, because the proposal put to the committee by Essensa was: (1) third party spending limits, following the lead of Canada, BC and Quebec; (2) third party contribution limits; (3) to attempt to limit third party advertising spending to the amounts a third party raises prior to and during an election; and (4)—this is the big one; this is the paramount one; this is the operative one; this is the one that has caused so much fuss here since Bill 195 was debated for second reading—Essensa put to the committee the adoption of stricter registration and anti-collusion provisions.

For the life of me—and perhaps the Conservatives have not done themselves a service by being so specific in identifying this Working Families Coalition. I know they've done it during question period; they do it out on the campaign trail; they do it in media. And there's no doubt about who that group is targeting; there's no doubt about that. You've got to be from another planet not to understand that. I would no doubt find that uncomfortable. I don't blame the Conservatives for wishing that weren't the case. But unless we're going to ban third party advertising entirely—and I'm not an advocate of that, and we should be very, very careful about where that takes us—

Mr. David Zimmer: Hear, hear.

Applause.

Mr. Peter Kormos: By the parliamentary assistant—then there will be times when the Liberals will suffer at the hand of third party advertisers, the New Democrats will suffer at the hand, and the Conservatives will suffer at the hand.

Come on, give me a break. Do you really think the Canadian Federation of Independent Business is out there touting NDP candidates? Please. And if and when they do, I'm going to start worrying about our policies. Do we really think that the chamber of commerce is going to—and the chamber should. I don't know if I've ever told you, but quite a few years ago now, the Dunnville Chamber of Commerce—you know where Dunnville is?

Interjection: Oh, yeah.

Mr. Peter Kormos: It's a beautiful, small town on Highway 3, out on the lake. It's a very Conservative town. They invited me to be their guest speaker at their annual chamber of commerce dinner. I went down and I gave my speech about how, when workers don't have jobs, or when jobs aren't unionized, workers aren't making decent pay; and if workers aren't making decent pay, they don't buy goods in local shops and those local shops don't exist. The chamber of commerce is sitting there, going, "That's strange. He's advocating unionism and higher wages, but he might have a point." They weren't sure. But 12 months later, I get invited back again—same chamber of commerce, same annual dinner. I made the same speech, only this time I railed a little more, and I think I mentioned the S-word a few times—you know, socialism.

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I was actually invited back yet one more time. So maybe I should be careful. Chambers of commerce have good reason to support New Democrats, because New Democrats fight for workers, fight for better pay for workers, fight for jobs and fight for unionized workplaces. When workers have jobs and better pay, when they're unionized so they can negotiate better pensions, they've got more money in their pockets to spend in their local economy. Go figure. So there you go. New Democrats understand.

Again, the parliamentary assistant says that the complete abolition of third party advertising—that would be interesting, but you've got a problem there, don't you, Parliamentary Assistant? The parliamentary assistant has a problem, because you've got the constitutionality of that. Remember? That was discussed. Because you have some jurisdictions that in fact tried to do that, or tried to, if I recall correctly—help me, when you stand up for your 20 minutes. Some jurisdictions imposed such miserably low spending levels, like \$100, that effectively it was a denial of speech, which, of course, is a constitutional issue.

So it appears that you can't exclude third party advertising, but you can regulate it, just like Essensa advocated to the committee: one, imposing spending limits—and they have to be reasonable ones; it can't be \$1,

because that would effectively mean you're denying them the right to do it. You impose reasonable spending limits. You can; that's constitutionally sound, because Quebec learned that, as I recall the evidence before the committee; two, adopt contribution limits; three, limit third party spending to the amount the third party raises prior to and during an election, so in other words, it can't work year in, year out, building up a huge war chest; and then finally, adopt stricter registration and anti-collusion provisions.

The committee recommended that that be included in Ontario's electoral legislation. Hell's bells, that's exactly what the member from the Conservative caucus did, from the riding of Wellington-Halton Hills, with his bill. Why aren't they applauding him? Why are they shooting him down?

Which takes me, just as a little aside but still very much on point, to private members' business. It's easy to get a private member's bill in here that advocates for yet one more day, a day for—name your social group, name your ethnic group, name your community; a day for owners of CCM bicycles. CCM Bicycle Day. And those bills pass, and, quite frankly, those bills often get third reading status in the horse trading that happens at the end of the season. That's coming on us too. I don't know why—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I'd ask those who are engaged in conversation to take it elsewhere.

The member for Welland, will you continue?

Mr. Peter Kormos: Thank you kindly, ma'am.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: We apologize.

Mr. Peter Kormos: The apology is accepted. I really don't mind that much. But I do appreciate your assistance, Speaker. This is a rowdy group.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Now we're listening. It's only going to get worse.

Mr. Peter Kormos: They're going to get hard to handle in short order.

The problem is, why wasn't a bill that's legitimate, like the Arnott bill—it could have been criticized by the government. Why couldn't the government see its way clear to pass it in principle, because the vote on second reading is in principle and in principle only? It seems to me that—I know that the parliamentary assistant is a very skilled lawyer, but sometimes his skills take him over the line into pettifoggery. I think I witnessed some of it when I read his comments in response to this bill, including the fuzziness—and this is worth reading twice. My apologies to the parliamentary assistant. I really do apologize; I don't intend to embarrass him.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: But you're going to.

Mr. Peter Kormos: No.

"My second point is that the bill is flawed." This is the parliamentary assistant referring to the Arnott bill. "Here's where it gets really fuzzy." Talk about ill-defined words: "really fuzzy." That's a real good legal term. Was that third year law school or the remedial year or the Law

Society of Upper Canada retraining you have to take now?

Hon. Carol Mitchell: Come on, now. We're listening.

Mr. Peter Kormos: I know that.

"When you read through the bill, it talks about collusion and it talks about express or implied knowledge. There's no definition section in the bill, so nobody knows exactly what one means or what the bill is intended to capture by the word 'collusion'; neither does it define what the bill is supposed to mean by 'express or implied knowledge' of third party advertising expenses."

But a little while later, his learned colleague the member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock assists the parliamentary assistant. Be careful, because the parliamentary assistant is sort of that country lawyer who walks up in front of a jury—you see a little bit of straw in his boots and cow dung—

Interjection.

Mr. Peter Kormos: —be quiet—and everybody thinks he's a bit of a hick, right? The parliamentary assistant will want to affect that demeanour from time to time, but he's sharp. He knows exactly what he's doing. It's legal legerdemain. It's the old David Copperfield stuff: "Look up there while I'm doing something over here." I think that's what the parliamentary assistant was trying to do. He was trying to befuddle us, trying to muddle or muddy the waters.

But his colleague the member for Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock, sitting across the way from him yet still in the same party—I'm not sure; I suspect that when his colleague stood up, the parliamentary assistant thought, "I'm going to get some support for the position I advocated here and the arguments that I made." But his colleague cut him off at the knees. Amazing. Don't these guys talk to each other? His colleague says, "'Collusion'—I looked it up. It says that it's 'a secret agreement between two or more parties for fraudulent, illegal or deceitful purposes.'" Well, bingo. Good for the member for Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock who, to his credit, is not a lawyer. He picked that little nugget up right out of there and captured it.

You've had occasions where people talk to you about the whole basket of dirty tricks, the whole bag of dirty tricks that are used during elections. As I say, we're in support of the bill. I'm not sure it's going to be as effective as the government would want us and the people to believe, and I'll tell you why. One, it's a prosecution under the Provincial Offences Act. When you've got the overt throwing of an election—that type of fraudulent activity—surely you want that to be a Criminal Code offence, don't you, Speaker? You want it to have criminal implications, and especially criminal consequences. If somebody is corrupting an election—I confess I haven't studied US legislation, but it seems to me that the Americans have done their share of corrupt elections, and if somebody is found with dirty hands, I suspect they'd find pretty effective ways of prosecuting that person, depending, of course, on who won and whether that person was doing it for the winner or the loser.

So we've got a couple of problems, and to be fair, the Attorney General was quite candid in identifying some of them. One of the first problems—and the member for Hamilton East-Stoney Creek raised it—is who is going to enforce this? As I recall—and the parliamentary assistant is going to be speaking in short order—the Chief Electoral Officer doesn't have investigators; he doesn't have an investigative team. That means there is no specific body with expertise that's going to be investigating these sorts of allegations, and that means we have to rely on the police to do them.

Well, police have a problem. One, this isn't the sort of thing that police tend to be comfortable with. It's not Criminal Code stuff. Cops like the Criminal Code. They understand that. They understand how to investigate, how to collect evidence to prosecute and, indeed, how to participate in the prosecution. The other problem is that there simply aren't enough cops.

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Do you use the municipal police in the municipality in which the alleged offence occurred or do you use the OPP?

People should take a look at the Election Act itself. You retain section 98.1 of the Election Act, which is under the corrupt practice section, that, "No prosecution shall be instituted under this act without the Chief Electoral Officer's consent." Well, wait a minute. What does that mean? That means that it's going to be a rare day—because there are any number of pieces of legislation that require either the Attorney General's consent or, in this case, the Chief Electoral Officer's consent. Why would a prosecution require that officer's permission? How can that prosecution in any way be deemed independent, then, of the electoral officer itself, whose own people will be the people who will be most likely to be charged with miscounting a vote?

That section in Bill 196 that the Attorney General pointed to over and over again, that section that makes it illegal to wilfully miscount the ballots or otherwise wilfully make up a false statement of a poll—it's the Chief Electoral Officer to whom that person is accountable, that person is the Chief Electoral Officer's staff person, and you go down the line. And yet you need the Chief Electoral Officer's permission before you can prosecute? Does that make you comfortable? It raises some serious questions for me.

Then you've got the issue of jurisdiction—and I appreciate that the Attorney General has clearly thought about that. It seems to me that the legislation is caught between a rock and a hard place, or at least the drafters were. On the one hand, they write, "A person who, inside or outside Ontario, does anything for the purpose of aiding another person to commit the offence described in subsection (1)"—which is, "A person who, inside or outside Ontario, prevents another person from voting or impedes or otherwise interferes with the person's exercise of the vote...." If we're talking about phoning people up and misdirecting them to a poll, I'm not sure that constitutes the offence. Is it impeding the person? It's frustrating the person. Do you understand what I'm

saying? Impeding is when you lock the doors of the person's house. Impeding is where you physically block them—not frustrating.

Try to understand, the legislation talks about impeding. I've talked about the scenario that we read about—true or not, it was reported often enough—that people were being phoned up and told, “Your polling area is on the other side of town.” Is that impeding? I'm not sure. It could be just frustrating.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: You've putting up a barrier.

Mr. Peter Kormos: No, you're not preventing them from going to the right voting booth.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: You're sending them to the wrong place.

Mr. Peter Kormos: But you're not making them go there.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: But you're telling them that's where—

Mr. Peter Kormos: You're influencing them, yes. I'm just worried about that. A smart lawyer like Mr. Zimmer is liable to—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Shafiq Qaadri): However edifying the internal conversation, I would respectfully invite members to please direct comments through the Chair.

Mr. Peter Kormos: It was the Minister of Transportation who started it, Speaker. You should know that. If she hadn't provoked me, I wouldn't have been drawn into the conversation and I wouldn't have broken the rules. Here we are, three days before we break for the summer, and she's setting me up.

I'm not sure. The issue of extra-jurisdictional authority or out-of-province jurisdiction—because he talked about pan-Canadian jurisdiction. We've been told of non-Canadian call centres being used in the course of elections to do blasts—getting check marks: “Do you intend to support this candidate or this candidate?” We've learned about them coming from the United States. Does the Attorney General want us to believe that a dirty tricks call centre operating out of the United States would be impacted by this legislation? I don't think so. So when he was speaking, I interjected, “Extradition.” What's the provincial extradition power here? In a federal offence, in a Criminal Code offence, you've got extradition power, don't you? If it's a call centre in another province—again, it's not uncommon at all for Manitoba call centres, Quebec call centres, east coast call centres to be used in provincial and federal elections, but here we're talking about provincial elections—what jurisdiction is there over a call centre that commits the act in New Brunswick? With respect, I say “none.”

It's going to make it harder for the tricksters to operate—no mistake about it. But then the tricksters—I was talking with a lawyer, a very good lawyer, a very smart guy; this time, not the parliamentary assistant. You thought I was talking about him. It could have been him, but it wasn't.

We were talking about the whole concept, and this ties into the whole business of punishment—penalties. It's a

long-time premise that the penalty is not a deterrent to the crime; it's the likelihood of apprehension. As we were talking and developing this, he explained to me: “Look, impaired driving convictions and the serious consequences that flow don't seem to—we've reached some sort of ceiling in terms of stopping impaired driving. What really stops impaired driving is if there's a R.I.D.E. check on every street corner, because people's likelihood of apprehension increases exponentially.”

So will dirty tricksters still engage in this sort of stuff when there's minimal likelihood of apprehension, never mind of prosecution and conviction? I don't know. Politics are a big-stakes business, and dirty tricks—again, I'm just amazed at the story that appeared late last night in the Toronto Sun, where a Conservative candidate had a vulgar photo of his private parts posted on his Twitter site. The person in charge of his Twitter site or whatever it was saw it within 20 or 30 minutes and took it down, but sure enough, the Toronto Sun found out about it before that.

But hold on. Then you've got a very bizarre article in the Toronto Sun where the communications director for the Ontario Conservatives said that the photo of Lepp's junk—I consider them jewels, not junk—was “inadvertently taken by Lepp's BlackBerry when it was in his front pocket. The photo was posted after someone took it from the candidate for the riding of Niagara Falls.”

Now, the pictures—they say “pictures” here; I don't know whether that's accurate, because I don't know whether there were more than one—are “too graphic to reproduce in the newspaper.” Oh, please; it's the Toronto Sun. When were they ever squeamish about stuff like that? Maybe a doctor could include it in his medical column in the Globe and Mail. In any event, the picture, “too graphic to reproduce in the newspaper,” is “of a man naked from the waist down, showing a close-up of his penis and his crossed legs.”

Look at me. You've never known me to carry a BlackBerry. I'm not a fan. Don't own one, never used one and, after this, never will. So we're to believe that the BlackBerry was in his pants pocket.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: But he's naked from the waist down.

Mr. Peter Kormos: But he's naked from the waist down, and then, as one very clever government member told me today, it's dark down there; where does the lighting come from? But the story gets weirder, because one of the statements is that this Conservative candidate was jostled by protestors. Again, I was there.

Mr. Jeff Leal: Did you see the protestors?

Mr. Peter Kormos: Yes, I saw five very young Liberals standing out in front of the placards, but they were out way down by the road. They were very young Liberals, with those Brylcreem-style signs, one after the other. Then we're told that the cellphone was stolen by—

Mr. Jeff Leal: Protestors.

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Mr. Peter Kormos: No, by the anime people. The latest version of the story is that he was jostled by these anime kids with their Japanese—

Mr. Paul Miller: Ninja.

Mr. Peter Kormos: —ninja things, right? I spent an hour waiting for the policy platform to be released yesterday—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Shafiq Qaadri): Honourable members, I would just share with the chamber that I've had at least one visit from the table officers here inviting the honourable member to please come back to the topic.

Mr. Peter Kormos: I appreciate your gratitude to the table officers. You're not supposed to rat them out like that, Speaker. Honest. Nobody likes a rat. Good God. What were you like in high school?

I'm talking about dirty tricks, and I'm increasingly suspicious. There's a story behind the story behind the story behind the story on this one. At this point, I'm not sure that this wasn't a dirty trick, and we don't know by whom, of course. It could have been by a civilian, but it's the sort of thing that could be so politically damaging that when it's done, especially to a novice candidate, it would certainly fall under the category of dirty tricks.

So where do we find comfort in the legislation? Besides, that story was never going to get on Hansard if I hadn't done it today. You know that, Speaker. You understand that. Okay.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: What a tragedy.

Mr. Peter Kormos: There are records that have to be kept.

There's nothing in this legislation that talks about dirty tricks in the broadest sense. Does destroying lawn signs—and we know why people destroy lawn signs: one, because the cost of replacing them has become huge. Those corrugated plastic ones that are about three and a half feet by three and a half feet are 15 bucks apiece. That can really beat the daylight out of a campaign if they start coming down in the dark of the night. It's also demoralizing for that campaign, although it can have a counter-effect. Does this bill address anything akin to that?

Does this bill address anything akin, quite frankly, to stealing—as it appears, there's at least a newspaper report of a Volpe worker taking literature out of the mailbox, and that's not entirely uncommon. There isn't anybody here who isn't aware of that having taken place. Does this bill cover that conduct?

Does this bill cover the overt dishonesty in campaigns that are used in push polls, for instance, to change or influence a voter's perception of a particular candidate on entirely speculative, if not outright fabricated, information? I don't think so.

Why didn't the Attorney General come to the opposition parties? Why didn't the Attorney General tell his House leader that the bill was forthcoming? Why didn't the House leader say, "Look"—and as soon as she learned about the bill, she called us. She did. She called us the night before the bill was introduced for first reading, at around 6:30 or so at night, trying to get a hold of both the opposition House leader and myself, to let us know the bill was coming. I appreciate that from her.

But why, unlike in other instances, like amendments to the Members' Integrity Act, wasn't the bill simply shared with the other caucuses so that they could take it to their caucus? It seems to me that that's the way you do this type of legislation, because the Attorney General is correct: It's not partisan; then why treat it as if it was? And why be so brutal about Bill 195 that comes through an opposition member, when for that bill to have survived the vote would have only meant that it got second reading? The author of that bill would know that there isn't a snowball's chance in Hades—I notice that there are children here; I'm watching my language: Hades, hell—of that bill having received third reading. It wouldn't have had time to go to committee. Instead, there was a rather vicious attack on the private member's bill during the course of that brief one hour—less than one hour—allotted to debating it from the government. Again, I don't shoot the messenger, by any stretch of the imagination. That's a tactic that this government has used, especially in private members' public business.

Why does that happen? Why can't the government encourage members, backbenchers of all political stripes, to come up with good, substantive stuff instead of celebrating another—we could have ouzo day. Charlie and Mary down at the Fireside in Welland would love it if we declared ouzo day: "Today is ouzo day." I'd be there with Charlie every ouzo day, right on the dot at 11 in the morning. There's far too many of that type of bill. Yet there's been some incredibly creative and smart stuff that has come forward in this chamber.

I'm not suggesting that it go to third reading, but the important thing is that it go to committee. We've got committees that sit idle weeks at a time with nothing to do.

Interjection.

Mr. Peter Kormos: It's true. We've got committees that sit idle months at a time that should be considering private members' public business, at least to have public hearings and to consider how amendments—if it's an opposition member's bill, from the government; or if it's a government member's bill, from the opposition—might make the bill a little better. It may not pass that round, but it may become a part of government policy when they introduce a new round of legislation after, let's say, a throne speech or a budget. That would be fine, too. There's nothing wrong with that. It has happened more than a few times.

If people suggest that we've done lots of committee time here, well, let me tell you, there was a time here when you did a lot of committee time. There was a time here when private members' public business received far more thorough consideration. There was a time here when committees had the power—and a member had the unilateral power, if a committee was sitting idle, without the need of a super majority from the committee—to bring a matter of interest in that committee's jurisdiction for consideration by that committee; perhaps a matter within the scope of a particular ministry that that committee was accountable to or a particular policy issue or a

particular social issue or problem out there in the real world. That's been crushed here.

Look, I'm not telling stories out of school. I go to committees, and I see modest committee hearings, more modest than I've ever seen before.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Not more modest than under the previous government.

Mr. Peter Kormos: The previous government has unfortunately set the new standard.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The previous government set a very low standard.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Well, that's right, and you haven't aspired beyond it.

See, she's doing it again, Speaker. She's a provocateur.

Interjection.

Mr. Peter Kormos: I apologize; a bona fide provocatrice.

The problem is, committees are sitting idle, and they should be doing work. Opposition backbenchers have got lots to do, especially when you're in a small caucus, because you're the critic of everything. There's a whole lot of skilled government backbenchers who don't have a whole lot to do. They're not parliamentary assistants. They're not ministers. Ministers are busy; I know that. Parliamentary assistants can be busy or not be busy, depending upon how they fit into their ministry's plan. But there's a whole lot of government backbenchers who have talent here. There's a few who don't, but that's okay. That's the bell curve, and the bell curve applies here as well as it does out there in the real world—because this certainly isn't the real world. There's talent in here that isn't being utilized, that isn't being exploited, that isn't being put to work. And there's a level of partisanship—and I know that from time to time I become partisan—here that makes this a far less meaningful place than it could or should be.

But we'll see. There's going to be an election on October 6. I am excited about it. I hope that Ontarians are. I think they are. It's going to be a tough, mean-spirited campaign. It's going to be rife, it will roil, with dirty tricks, all of those not covered by this specific legislation.

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The war room operators will be in full swing. You've got an opposition party that figures it's got government in its sights and that the government has been crippled; that the government's back has been broken. You've got a New Democratic Party that's excited about a leader who's different, who does things differently, and a New Democratic Party that's going to roll out policy and a platform in short order and in due course that won't just have people chattering around the water cooler, but will have people excited and finally feeling some hope.

The other issue around this bill, Bill 196, Speaker—and I know you would never do to the table what your predecessor just did here in this chamber. You're not that type of person.

Interjection.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Oh, my goodness, what do we have here?

Interjection: The parliamentary assistant is back.

Mr. Peter Kormos: We're coming up now to the contribution by the parliamentary assistant. People are waiting with bated breath. He's got the textbooks piled high so that the notes are closer to the surface. I think I'd better put my waders on. People ask why I wear cowboy boots in here. It's because sometimes that stuff gets pretty high, and it's wet and it's warm. Farm folk understand what I'm talking about.

How is this bill going to get committee hearings? I don't understand how that's going to happen. Because when we reach second reading vote, of course, as you know—look, I think, as a matter of due diligence, it's the rare bill that should not have committee hearings, and this bill may not require a whole lot. I suggested that already to the government House leader—perhaps, and I don't want to bind myself here, only an hour or two.

Surely we have to have Mr. Essensa come in here and put his fingerprints on this. Do you want to pass this legislation without doing due diligence, without having some of those fundamental questions asked of the people who've been advocating the bill—either the civil service—don't think for a minute that the Attorney General was sitting down at his keyboard working late into the night, burning the midnight oil, typing up Bill 196. It's policy development. I suspect it came out of the Premier's office. It may well be somebody's wish list. It could well be Greg Essensa's, the Chief Electoral Officer, wish list. Well, say so. Let us know. What's with the secrecy? What's with the clandestine style? Just straighten up, speak up and speak out. We won't know that unless and until we have committee hearings, and I, for the life of me, don't know where we're going to fit those in. The House is sitting Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

I understand that the government House leader has plans for Tuesday and Wednesday night here for the House. We're going to be addressing the firefighters' bill later this evening, and I've told the firefighters already that that's going to be a very brief third reading debate, at least as far as I'm concerned, because we made that commitment to them.

Is this government really going to pass this bill on third reading without the due diligence of committee? Because it's happened a few times—more than a few times—and regrettably, almost inevitably, it has come up to bite you on the butt a year, two years or three years later, and then somebody says to you, "Why did you vote for that? Why didn't you have committee hearings?" People will say, "I don't know. The Premier's office wanted it that way." Well, it ain't going to be the Premier taking the heat; it's going to be you, because if this bill doesn't do what it says it's going to do—and I'm not convinced that it does. I'm not convinced that it's not just a little bit of huff and puffery, although, for the life of me, why the Attorney General wants this as his legacy legislation just boggles the mind. Perhaps the parliamentary assistant can explain that, but he shouldn't be required to speak for the Attorney General. Maybe he

doesn't feel comfortable. Maybe he just plain shouldn't speak for the Attorney General.

Interruption.

Mr. Peter Kormos: What do I have in my hands now? It's like a sheriff serving a writ—notice for time allocation on Bill 188, McMichael Canadian Art Collection Amendment Act. What's going on here? We had told the government we were going to collaborate on that bill because it's an important piece of legislation that has to be passed before the House rises.

A time allocation motion on Bill 181? It's the firefighters' bill. We had a committee on it. We told the firefighters—heck, I just told them this afternoon that we were going to wrap that up tonight. Maybe the leader of the Conservative Party is right: You guys just can't help yourselves. You're hard-wired now.

We had a very funny slide when Hudak was talking about how you can't blame a raccoon for breaking into your garbage if you don't put the clamps on the garbage lid, and there's a raccoon looking around a tree, and it said, "Just like you can't blame the Premier of Ontario for raising your taxes," because it's instinctive. It was very funny.

Hon. Sophia Aggelonitis: No, it's not funny.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Sophie, you should have seen it. It was very funny. You would have laughed.

In any event, what's with the time allocation motions? And now a time allocation motion on Bill 196.

Mr. Norm Miller: Where are the committee hearings?

Mr. Peter Kormos: Hold on; let's check for committee hearings. This is offensive. This is really repugnant. For the AG to open with his melodramatic democracy and voting speech—no committee hearings. That's absurd.

In the context of this kind of legislation, these people should be ashamed of themselves that they won't even sit down with the opposition and talk about having a committee hearing for an hour or two in the evening, or having a committee meeting for an hour or two at 8 in the morning, if need be, or 8:30. We've got till 10:30, when question period starts. You people should be ashamed of yourselves. We've told you we support the legislation.

I also made it clear to the government House leader that we expected, on the basis of due diligence—do you understand what that means? It's not members of the Legislature; it's trained seals voting for a bill because they're told to, and not even being sure that they're asking the right questions of the right people, which could happen at committee hearings.

This is ending this session on a very, very foul note—a very, very foul tone. All I know is that this is what will motivate New Democrats to campaign like the devil and elect more New Democrats than ever before, and I suspect it might be motivating to the Conservatives as well, although I don't want to speak for them.

Time allocation when we haven't even finished the leads—time allocation. By God, I said it to the press: You know how legislation progresses through the House,

and if you want co-operation from the opposition parties, then you've got to be collaborative and you've got to talk to them. It has become clear—I told the press this last week—that you guys couldn't organize a drunk-up in a brewery, and this bungled bill is an example of that. This is sad. Shame on all of you.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Comments and questions?

Mr. David Zimmer: We've had a couple of hours of debate, speeches from the opposition totalling about two hours. But the basic point here—and I made the point the other day, and I've got a copy of Hansard. I made this statement: "So I say to the members opposite, I say to the members of my own caucus, how, when the question is posed that way"—that is, on eliminating voter interference—"can you possibly cast a vote against a motion that renews this chamber's collective commitment to stamping out voter suppression? That's the heart of our democracy, and we as democrats, we as people living in a free society, we as people who base our governance on the result of free elections in the fullest sense of the word—I say to the members opposite, whether they be in the third party, the official opposition or, indeed, my own party members, how can" anyone "possibly go on record as voting against a motion that says we're all renewing our pledge to free, unencumbered elections? We will not stand for any form of voter suppression."

So, why two hours of speeches opposing this? Let me just quote from the Guelph Mercury, May 20. It says, "Bentley wants the new law in place before" October 6.

"At first blush it seems a no-brainer that all parties would want to support....

"But they're not."

It goes on to say that the legislation appears "to acknowledge concerns shared by many Ontarians in the wake of May 2" and they want steps taken to address these. This is the core of it from the Guelph Mercury: "The only people opposed to an effort to crack down on such underhanded tactics should be those who stand to gain from them." Enough said.

1700

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further comments and questions?

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I'm very pleased to comment on my colleague's speech. I'm always entertained to hear Mr. Kormos speak on any piece of legislation.

Here we are, a couple days left in this Parliament, and after eight long and painful years, they find some legislation to bring in on making the election system better. They're going to, in a very democratic way—surely, I was wrong; they're not going to time-allocate this. They are going to time-allocate this after eight long years. They had all that time that they could have to bring in this bill if it was so important, and after eight years, here they are. They're going to time-allocate it at the last second.

Why would they be time-allocating it? Because Bill 195 said it all. Bill 195, my friends, my seatmate brought in back on May 16. I can tell you, it's just an embarrass-

ment to this government that after promising the people in this Legislature they wouldn't bring in more legislation, they bring in a bill the very next day. After voting Bill 195 down, they bring it in and try to humiliate the House and make fools of themselves on it.

I think that says it all. I don't know whether people are going to support this or not. In the end, I've got a bunch of comments. I'll be speaking myself in a few moments on the bill and I have a lot of comments—actually, newspaper articles—to read into the record on some of the activities that took place during the federal election from members of what I guess used to be the official opposition federally and now they're a party in disarray. We'll look forward to that. Again, I thank the member for his speech and look forward to further debate on this.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Comments and questions?

Mr. Paul Miller: I'd like to thank the member from Welland. Once again he has outdone himself with the depth of his knowledge and his research.

Frankly, I can understand his frustration about this bill coming in at the last minute. I can also understand his frustration with time allocation. I can also understand his frustration with committees around here. In four years, now that this session is coming to an end, after hundreds and hundreds of amendments that this third party brought forward in committee, and the one committee I served on in particular, I think maybe two saw the light of day out of hundreds. Why is that? Because there are five Liberals on the committee, two Conservatives and one NDP. Mr. Kormos put forward his comments that there are a lot of good things that come from this side of the House that fall on deaf ears and they don't make it to first base. Then, further on, you'll see them. Maybe a few months down the road, they suddenly appear. Some of the things that you brought forward suddenly appear in a government bill and they're running and telling the public how wonderful this is and it looks extremely familiar to what we put in and it's almost to the word, almost copied. That really amazes me, and the public really doesn't understand this situation because they don't understand how committees work because a lot of them don't sit in committees. But they see the frustration on the faces of the opposition members on committee that they don't get anything done unless it's done by the government of the day. If it's their idea, it goes through. If it's anyone else's idea they squash it, even if it's a good idea.

This is another example of something not being debated. It's being brought forward at the last minute. The only reason this bill is being brought forward is because of the results of the federal election. They feel that there's some hanky-panky going on that might hurt them again.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further comments or questions?

Mr. Jeff Leal: The member from Welland, when he wasn't, perhaps, referring to George losing his Tory briefs over the weekend, did spend some time talking about a very important issue, a fundamental right that we

have in terms of voting in elections. But it's interesting: Not only is this an issue here, it's an issue in the United States. Back on May 18, I picked up a copy of *USA Today*, and in the back, in its opinion forum, they talked about the GOP's 2012 game plan to keep voters at home. It said:

"Across America, Republican lawmakers have talked a big game about cutting budgets, but they also are seeking reductions to something much more fundamental: Americans' voting rights. From coast to coast, the GOP is engaged in what appears to be a coordinated, expensive effort to block voters from the polls.

"The motivation is political—a cynical effort to restrict voting by traditionally Democratic-leaning Americans. In more than 30 states, GOP legislators are on the move," from rewriting Florida's election laws to "new rules for photo identification in Ohio, Wisconsin, North Carolina and more than 20 other states."

When you take the time to read this full article, you certainly sense that as legislators, we have an obligation to make sure that people have the sense of confidence that they can go to an election polling station, participate in the election process, and that that process has a great deal of integrity involved in it. That's the democratic hallmark. Anything that we can do collectively to improve it—there had been some allegations made during the federal election, and this bill—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. The member from Welland has two minutes to respond.

Mr. Peter Kormos: This is ironic in so many ways, because the Liberal Party has for a long time held the crown for being the dirty tricksters of electioneering, not just in my time but I can recall what my father and grandfather had to say about it. It brings to mind as well the phrase that I recalled from down home just the other day: whoever smelled it probably dealt it. So these guys come up with token election reforms, when the meaty stuff, when the stuff that's going to make a real difference, when the stuff that's going to hinder their ability to twist, torque and turn election returns, remains to the back burner, remains ignored. Strange, ain't it?

It sure is peculiar that the government, when it had the opportunity with the Sorbara report and its recommendations, would not have provided a more exhaustive set of amendments around anti-corruption, because the recommendations were there. They were most certainly there. Why the government wouldn't have worked so far with the federal justice ministry, which is eager to pass new Criminal Code provisions—we know that Rob Nicholson, the Tory federal justice minister, loves the new Criminal Code provisions. Why we don't have Criminal Code provisions that apply to federal and provincial and municipal elections boggles the mind, because it would be clear, then, who has to investigate and who prosecutes and on what standard. You wouldn't need the sign-off of the Chief Electoral Officer, which, as I say, is a dangerous, strange thing, because many of the people who are going to be investigated under this legislation will be

employees of his. Is he going to be that eager to sign off on them when he basically approved them—or she; it's a he now, but it could be a she—by employing them?

I don't know why the government just doesn't end the debate now and then call it again—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. Further debate?

Mr. David Zimmer: Let me try and stay away from the rhetoric that we've heard for the last couple of hours and talk about what's actually in the bill.

As the Attorney General noted, the bill, if passed, will help to protect the integrity of our elections and ensure that Ontarians have the right to freely exercise their vote without interference.

I say to members of this chamber, the right to vote is at the very foundation of any democracy, but this right is most meaningful and effective if the vote can be exercised freely and without interference.

Ontario's Election Act prohibits a number of corrupt practices, such as bribery and wilful miscounting of votes. However, the act in its current form contains some loopholes that may be vulnerable to exploitation. This leaves our voters at risk. This leaves their free and unfettered choice at risk. That's why our government is advocating these much-needed amendments.

1710

The proposed amendments would make it illegal for any person, either within or outside the province, to attempt to interfere with an elector's ability to vote in a provincial election. The bill would also outlaw impersonations of election officials, candidates and persons authorized to act on behalf of candidates, parties and constituency associations. The law would apply to those who commit the offences directly, as well as to those who counsel, aid and abet the activities; in other words, someone who hires or asks another person to call a voter with misleading information. These two amendments seek to prevent interference with voting through false statements or other activities, as well as the impersonation of Elections Ontario officials.

Finally, the proposed legislation would permit steep fines and long prison sentences for those offences, as well as various other corrupt practices, under the Election Act. What this means is that in addition to the two new offences we've articulated in the bill, the penalties for other serious wrongdoing related to provincial elections will also increase considerably.

For example, a person who deliberately miscounts ballots, a person who knowingly votes twice, a person who bribes another person to vote a certain way or who wilfully provides false residency information to an elections official would also face fines of up to \$25,000 per offence and a prison sentence of up to two years less a day. Previously, the fine for committing a corrupt practice under the act was \$5,000 and a minimum of six months in jail.

I believe that the new tougher penalties reflect the seriousness of these actions as well as the determination of our government to stamp out election fraud in this

province. That's what the voters of Ontario expect. That's what they will get with this bill.

We know that strong penalties can be and are an effective deterrent, and by being very specific with regard to the fraudulent activities that we want to target, we are making it easier for law enforcement officials to investigate activities and to lay charges. We bring a whole new level of clarity to this area.

I echo the sentiments expressed by my colleague the Attorney General and by other members of the House who may be concerned about allegations of election fraud taking place in their ridings during the recent federal election.

Of course, we know that election fraud is not new. Certainly, the history of elections in democratic societies is rife with examples of dirty tricks, pranks and hoaxes during elections, in all jurisdictions and at all levels of government. Given this history, we've heard a lot of people asking, "What are we doing now in Ontario to stamp this out?" We read in the press about what's going on in other countries throughout the world—in the Middle East, in Southeast Asia, in African countries—and sometimes some of the tactics that we have experienced here in Ontario are in many ways bordering on what we're seeing in those countries. People are saying, "Why do we, in our very advanced and sophisticated democracy, even tolerate a hint of this kind of activity?" This bill is designed to address that question and to stamp out that kind of activity.

The fact is the act of wilfully misleading citizens in order to prevent them from voting has not been a significant issue in Ontario during the past provincial elections, but given the recent allegations of these sorts of activities that the Attorney General just described, the stuff that went on in the last federal election, it's absolutely incumbent on this Legislature to stamp this activity out right at the start so that the culture of this kind of activity doesn't seep into our culture. We want to nip this in the bud right now, and that's what this act is designed to do. We felt an obligation that we had to take this opportunity to respond immediately, quickly and with clarity.

What we found was that because we don't currently have the legal protections against these kinds of activities, Ontario voters are particularly vulnerable to them, and more so than in other jurisdictions that we've analyzed. We found that in Ontario, it's not specifically illegal to wilfully mislead a voter in order to prevent them from voting in an Ontario provincial election. That is something that just cannot be allowed to stand. We demand and we require a clear legislative statement that that conduct will not be permitted. Our law, as it currently stands, contains a gap, and to address it we have put forward a bill that would impose hefty fines and tough penalties on anyone caught committing the alleged fraudulent acts.

This bill will protect voters. This bill will protect their right to exercise their most fundamental democratic right. We are acting as swiftly as possible to prevent the same

thing that happened during the federal election recently from happening during future provincial elections.

We got a sense of what might happen if we do not stop this kind of behaviour in its tracks, and that's what this legislation is designed to do. It's preventive legislation. It sends a clear message that that's not how we do elections in Ontario. We are working very hard to prevent individuals from once again making our citizens targets and from attempting to tamper with the democratic processes that we all—that all members of this House, on the Liberal side, on the Conservative side and the NDP side—recognize.

We are adopting the best practices. In reviewing our laws, we looked at the policies that other provinces and territories already have in place for dealing with election fraud, as well as what protections exist at the federal level. What we found is that many provinces and territories do indeed have some legal protections already in place to defend voters from the kinds of activities that went on in the recent federal election. For example, many provinces, including British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Quebec, and Newfoundland and Labrador, have laws that prohibit a person from impeding an elector's free exercise of their vote during a provincial election. For instance, New Brunswick prohibits a candidate or an agent or a representative of a candidate or a representative of a political party from knowingly giving incorrect information regarding the polling station where an elector may vote. When we look to western Canada, Alberta and British Columbia have laws that prohibit a person from impersonating an election official.

We also looked at the existing federal act. The federal act specifically prohibits any person, inside or outside of Canada, from preventing or attempting to prevent an elector from voting in a federal election. Given the circumstances of the Quebec-based telephone calls at the heart of the recent allegations arising out of the most recent federal election, we felt this was an important provision.

This idea of prohibiting anybody inside Canada or outside Canada is very, very important. In this highly technologically communicating society—computers and BlackBerrys and call centres—business gets done and calls get made in Ontario for banking arrangements or ordering products, and these calls may come from anywhere around the world. So the same thing, the same difficulty, the same challenges can be brought to bear with respect to interfering with voter processes: false information generated to voters onto their computers and BlackBerrys from offshore locations. This is something that, as I have said earlier, we have got to just nip in the bud while it's still young and in its infancy. We have to send the right message so that Ontario continues to become a model of the democratic process.

1720

The amendments we are proposing are a culmination of the very best of practices across Canada to ensure that we capture a broad range of fraudulent activity that undermines the democratic process.

Another very important objective of our proposed laws was to specifically address the problem of phone banks, and I started to make reference to this earlier in my remarks. The problem of phone banks, whether they are based within or outside of the province, poses a serious threat of interference with voters during election campaigns.

How have we addressed this? Well, we've addressed it in a couple of ways. For example, each time a person violates any of these new provisions—that is, each time they interfere with a voter's ability to vote or they impersonate election officials, the candidate or the representative of the candidate—that could constitute an offence. What this means is that two phone calls telling a voter to go to the wrong polling station could potentially be the subject matter of two separate charges.

The Ontario law would also explicitly apply to anyone who directs or hires another person to commit interference or engage in interference with the voter's right to freely and without interference cast their vote. Let me give you an example.

A company that hires a number of employees to place misleading calls could also face charges for every fraudulent call placed, and every charge could result in a conviction and a penalty. If you add up all of the financial penalties for all of those calls, that's quite a disincentive to engage in that activity.

Taken as a whole, and reflecting on the matter, I am very pleased to say that the amendments provide a very comprehensive and an up-to-date approach to dealing with election fraud. If passed, the law would ensure that Ontario voters enjoy protections that are among the strongest that you'll find in the country and, indeed, in the democratic world.

There's also another element to this legislation because, as we all know, Ontario and Canada were built on immigrants, immigrants coming from many parts of the world, with many, many immigrants coming from those parts of the world where the exercise of democratic rights is a challenge, if not problematic.

One of the things that attracts these immigrants to Canada and Ontario, among other things—obviously our economy and our education system. But when I talk to immigrants from some of these parts of the world, one thing that always stands out in my mind—and I see them in my constituency office time and time again. They come in, they're studying very hard and they know they're going to become a citizen in six months, a year or two years, and often they say to me that one of the things that they are looking forward to—their heart just sings and their mind reflects on this ability to cast a vote, which is something that, depending on what country they've come from, has been problematic and challenging to do so.

We want to give the right message to all of the new voters coming into the country, especially from those countries that I referred to before, that, in fact, you can vote how you want to vote in Ontario and that nobody is going to interfere with you. If you want to vote Con-

servative or NDP or Liberal, that's your absolutely unfettered right, and nobody, by any means—by subterfuge, by tricking you or sending you to the wrong polling station or giving you misinformation, or robocalls coming in, misdirecting you or giving you false information that impedes your process—none of that is going to happen in Ontario. When we establish that kind of core, rock system, we are laying the very strongest foundation for our continuing democracy, especially with new Canadians who have come here from countries where the democratic process is somewhat more challenging. That's one of the reasons they came here, in addition to schools, jobs, education and health care.

Let me say a few words about penalties. After weighing the benefits and drawbacks of the various approaches across Canada and adopting the policies that we felt could give our citizens the best possible defence against fraudsters, we wanted to make sure that the proposed laws would be backed by a set of tough penalties. As I noted earlier, we're proposing to raise the fine for the definition of "corrupt practices" under the Election Act from a maximum of \$5,000 to \$25,000 and a maximum prison term of six months to a term of two years less a day. The new offences would be treated as corrupt practices, so these new penalties would apply to them as well.

In other jurisdictions across Canada, penalties related to these offences vary greatly, but generally include some combination of jail and fine. For example, at the federal level, the maximum penalty is \$5,000 and up to five years' imprisonment; Nova Scotia is \$2,000 and up to two years in prison; Labrador—\$5,000 fine or a six-month sentence; Saskatchewan and Alberta have the same fine and a two-year jail term; and British Columbia is \$20,000 and/or two years in jail. So if passed, our penalties would be among the toughest in the country. We'd send the clearest, loudest message to potential perpetrators that Ontario takes election fraud seriously by building on the very best of what is in place across the country. To address the troubling developments that occurred in the recent federal election, to nip this kind of attitude, this kind of conduct in the bud so it does not become a part of our political culture, is incumbent upon all of us as legislators here.

Electoral modernization has been and will continue to be a priority for our government. As I said in my remarks a couple of weeks ago in Hansard, and as I said earlier in one of my two-minute replies, all members of this Legislature, of whatever political stripe and party, have an interest in doing everything they can possibly do to enhance the democratic experience that Ontarians have in this province, especially during elections. It puzzles me why anybody in this chamber could possibly, on any level, object to this idea of strengthening our democratic institutions by ensuring and building and supporting and making stronger our electoral voting processes. That seems to me to be, as the Guelph Mercury said, a complete no-brainer. I challenge anybody to go on the record, to cast a vote against this. It just doesn't make—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. Comments and questions?

Mr. Norm Miller: I'm pleased to have a chance to comment on the speech from the member from Willowdale on Bill 196, An Act to amend the Election Act with respect to certain electoral practices. I know the member—at the beginning of his speech, anyway—was talking about the integrity of elections and how this bill was going to be fixing loopholes in the current election rules. I would simply say that if he wanted to fix loopholes, what he should be doing is amending this bill and adding on a section that deals with third party advertising, so that there are some rules governing groups like the Working Families Coalition—the Working Families Coalition, of course, being the name of a group that's funded by a number of different unions very closely associated with the Liberal Party, and its main goal is to defeat Progressive Conservative candidates in the election. The situation in Ontario is a situation where the Working Families Coalition will spend \$5 million to \$10 million outside of the election rules so that it isn't a level playing field. So if they really wanted to make a difference in the rules to do with elections, they would make that amendment to this bill.

1730

Frankly, this bill is based on some activities that happened in the federal election. I don't doubt they happened. That was a case of phone calls being made to people, telling them to go to the wrong poll. I still don't know how that would benefit anyone, but that seems to be the main motivation for this bill. Is it really going to make a difference? I don't really think it's going to make much difference, unless they choose to amend it. Of course, they have brought in a time allocation motion now, so it's not even going to go to committee. I don't know how they're going to amend it if they're not going to committee.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further comments?

Mr. Peter Kormos: I listened carefully to the address by the parliamentary assistant, who has done a most capable job of putting this legislation in the best possible light. He once again has been relied upon by the Attorney General and by the Premier's office to do the best he can with sometimes—and in this case, I believe—broken tools, but that's the sign of a good craftsman. Anybody can do it if they've got all the power saws and the Porter-Cables and the Deltas and the whole nine yards, but if you watch one of these old-timers, a carpenter or a machinist or a millwright with a ball-peen hammer and a pair of vise-grips, then you see artistry, not just the display of highly technical and sophisticated tools.

Here the PA, the member from Willowdale, has done it again. He has pulled a rabbit out of a hat for the Premier's office. He has done it from back there in the corner as well, which goes to his sense of commitment and pride in doing a good job. So I say to the parliamentary assistant: job well done. We wouldn't have expected anything less from you. I just look forward to

coming back here on October 6 when you're in a position to tell some of those people who make you do some of these sordid things to go pound salt, to find someone else, because you will have had significant seniority by then.

I'm making assumptions. I'm assuming that you're one of the Liberals who will come back. I may be wrong about that. I know that there are going to be Liberals who don't come back; that's a certainty. Some of them are being said goodbye to over the course of Tuesday and Wednesday night. But the member for Willowdale will be back, I'm sure, and it's good to see him in action again.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further comments?

Mr. Jeff Leal: I did listen very carefully to my colleague the member from Willowdale. He does have an interesting background. Prior to coming here in 2003 he was one of Toronto's most distinguished attorneys, practising law in this great city in a wide variety of areas and developing a stellar reputation—not only as a lawyer and as a legal scholar, and providing commentary on a wide variety of topics, but he certainly added to the debate this afternoon on this bill, Bill 196, and the kind of changes that we'd like to make here.

This whole issue of third party advertising is rather interesting. I asked legislative research not too long ago to do a bit of a background paper on this, and interestingly enough there was a strange third party coalition that took out ads against the Rae government in 1995, criticizing him for his anti-business behaviour, and there was always some speculation about who was behind that interesting coalition.

It's also interesting that during the debate about generic drug legislation in the province of Ontario, lo and behold, an interesting coalition formed during that. One Mark Spiro was involved, and Shopper's Drug Mart and some of the largest drug-dispensing organizations in the province of Ontario. That sort of came right out of the blue, so to speak, and was targeting Liberal MPPs right across the province. If one wants to have a healthy and fulsome discussion about third parties I think it's important that we discuss all these third party coalitions that seem to crop up from time to time. I think it would be a good idea and we would improve the—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. Further comments?

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I'll myself have the opportunity to speak to the bill in just a couple of minutes. It's always interesting to hear the member from Willowdale speak. I'm not going to give him quite as many compliments as the previous couple of people have given to him, but certainly, he does a lot of hard work on behalf of his caucus and he leads, as a point person, on a number of pieces of legislation that come through this Legislature. Again, I said I'll be speaking to it myself in a few minutes.

I'm really curious about the time allocation motion that's been brought in without any committee hearings.

That's what I found so strange. I guess I would consider that to be undemocratic, that we're dealing with a bill that is supposed to be all about improving the election system and then we turn around and we're going to time-allocate a bill that they have had eight long years to bring forward.

It wasn't just the federal election; there's been hanky-panky going on for decades. But after eight years, when they had other opportunities—look at all the millions of dollars that were spent around that referendum we had on the voting procedures in the province. This wasn't brought up at that time. But we bring it in at the last second and we time-allocate it in the last couple of sessional days here at the Legislature. I'll have an opportunity to bring that forward.

I also wanted to speak quite a bit about the Working Families Coalition and third party advertising, because you're absolutely right. All you had to do was support Bill 195. That's what that was referring to. I look forward to the opportunity in a few minutes.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member from Willowdale has two minutes to respond.

Mr. David Zimmer: I come back to the point that I made in the two-minuter before. We've had several hours of debate here. The core question is: Why wouldn't all members of this chamber—whatever their political persuasion, whatever their political party—be supportive of a piece of legislation that strengthens and builds on and enhances the integrity of the election process? That's good for all of us. That's point number one.

Point number two: The reason this legislation was brought on as quickly as it was is because in the recent federal election, it became clear that there were these voting practices that were interfering with the integrity of the individuals' right to cast their vote. I think we all have an obligation—again, whatever the political stripe here—to be nipping that kind of conduct in the bud so that that kind of conduct does not seep into our political culture and somehow become sort of, "Well, you know, everybody does it. It's out there." Then the thing starts to get out of control. There's an obligation for us, when we see something developing like that on the horizon that will interfere with the free and democratic voting rights, to nip it in the bud.

The third point I want to make is that all of those new Canadians who are coming here from countries where the democratic electoral process is somewhat more challenging and problematic—it's what I hear that they expect. We want to make them the best possible citizens that we can.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I'm pleased to rise and speak to Bill 196, An Act to amend the Election Act with respect to certain electoral practices, brought in on May 17 by the Attorney General.

"The bill amends the Election Act to add new sections, 96.2 and 96.3. Section 96.2 prohibits interference with voting. Section 96.3 prohibits impersonation of electoral

officials, candidates and persons authorized to act on behalf of candidates, parties and constituency associations.

"Several offences under the act, including the ones described in new sections 96.2 and 96.3, constitute 'corrupt practices' if committed knowingly. The existing penalty for a person who is found guilty of a corrupt practice is a fine of not more than \$5,000, imprisonment for a term of not more than six months, or both. The maximum fine for a corrupt practice is increased to \$25,000 and the maximum term of imprisonment to two years less a day." That's fairly strong sentencing, and we'll see—I'm assuming this bill is going to pass—how the courts will look at this.

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We basically support the goal of maintaining integrity in the election process, and unfortunately this bill falls far short of ensuring that all parts of electoral processes are conducted with integrity. The bill fails to address third party advertising, such as that of Working Families, which brings disrepute to the election process. The bill fails to address the concerns of the disability community, supported by the PC caucus during consideration of Bill 231, the Election Statute Law Amendment Act, 2010. The bill is overly broad. It will be difficult to enforce and is therefore unlikely to ensure integrity in the process. It's the enforcement and the security around it that's important to us.

I understand that the Attorney General feels that this can be handled appropriately. However, because the election is coming up very quickly, it will be difficult, I think, for even Elections Ontario to deal with this. With only six days left—actually, now only three days—until the House rises, and considering that this bill was slapped together after media reports suggested corrupt practices during the recent federal election, it's questionable how serious the Liberals are about ensuring integrity in the election process. Integrity is not a Liberal strong suit. Liberals support the Working Families Coalition. I'll get into that in a couple of minutes, but Liberals support secret sweetheart deals. Liberals support breaking promises. How can we believe a Liberal will support integrity now? Ted Arnott's Bill 195, An Act to amend the Election Finances Act to ban collusion in electoral advertising, will bring more integrity to the election process.

The problem is how this process was done. I want to read a few of the newspaper articles from this recent election. They all basically zero in on people from the federal Liberal caucus. But I do want to spend some time on Mr. Arnott's bill. I think he did this with a lot of thought. Bill 195 was all about third party advertising and collusion. It was to be a complete process. I think the member from Peterborough had mentioned a few minutes earlier that if we're going to bring forward a bill on third parties, we have to bring forward a complete bill forward. The reality is that Mr. Arnott's bill did that, and the government members were whipped in here to vote this thing down. One day later in this Legislature, all of a

sudden, we get Bill 196 out of nowhere. I've seen some newspaper and some TV ads around election signs missing and some flat tires in one riding up here. It doesn't matter what riding in the country you go to; you'll find someone who has taken a sign down or cut a sign with a knife or something, or maybe even stole some, but we just couldn't see how severe it was. Was it really that severe in the federal election to warrant the Ontario government to bring in this last-ditch effort to divert attention away from Bill 195? That's the way it appeared to be.

A lot of my constituents are talking about this now, because they're very familiar with the Working Families Coalition and the amount of money that's being—we know now that it's being diverted to slam and demonize our leader. It has started already. They're in collusion, of course, with the Liberal Party of Ontario. It's as simple as that. I don't think the Liberals are even denying it anymore. The reality is that this is a piece of legislation that would have solved that. If something isn't done with the attempt at the Working Families Coalition, other coalitions will develop with other organizations supporting other parties, and it will be worse than the American political system. The reality is, if we had adopted Bill 195 and supported it and done away with these third party advertising organizations—and he mentioned something about the pharmacists and other groups—that would have saved that. But the way we're going now, we're going in a very declining level of electioneering as far as I'm concerned, and I think it's going to be very difficult for elections in the future.

If we are successfully elected—and I'm quite confident right now that our party will do very well in the upcoming election—I think this is something that our party would like to address, as something very similar to what Bill 195 says. I personally would love to see that brought forward, as a government member, and actually do away with this kind of what I consider to be very dirty politics.

I wanted to read a couple of articles, while I have a bit of time here, about some of the things that came about as a result of election 2011. One is from election 2011, and the headline is, "Liberal Volunteer Charged in Connection with Theft of Tory Signs." It's by Kathryn Carlson. Here's the story:

"A Liberal volunteer in a key battleground riding will confront a judge nine days after the federal election, facing criminal charges in connection with the theft of Conservative campaign signs.

"The drama unfolded last weekend in Brampton West—Canada's most populous riding, where Liberal incumbent Andrew Kania is again squaring off against rival Conservative candidate Kyle Seebach. There, Rachpal Singh Grewal, a 47-year-old Grit volunteer, was arrested after police stopped his vehicle on a local Brampton street and found 'several' Tory placards, Peel Regional Police confirmed.

"The arrest was made public on Monday by Mr. Seebach's campaign manager, Mitch Wexler, and Mr.

Kania has since said his volunteer claims to have been framed.

“‘[Mr. Grewal’s] belief is that volunteers with Conservative candidate Kyle Seebach planted the signs in his truck after an argument,’ Mr. Kania said. ‘There was some verbal altercation, he went into a home and left the doors of his car unlocked. He says he has a witness who will support that.’” Can you imagine someone leaving a car unlocked in Brampton?

“Sgt. Zahir Shah said police had been acting on a call from the ‘member of the public’ when authorities stopped Mr. Grewal, who Mr. Kania said had no official role with the campaign or local riding association.

“‘We’ve had complaints in past elections about signs being damaged or stolen, but this is the first gentleman in this election that’s been charged, at least that I’m aware of,’ Sgt. Shah said.

“Mr. Grewal was charged with possessing stolen property and will appear in a Brampton court on May 11—one week after the federal election, which promises to be a tight race in the Ontario riding, where just 231 votes separated Mr. Kania and Mr. Seebach in the 2008 election.” Of course, we know the spread was much higher than that—in the thousands.

“‘This is a serious matter,’ Mr. Kania said. ‘We expect volunteers to follow the law, period.’

“Conservative leader Stephen Harper has visited Brampton three times so far in this campaign, and has been actively courting the vulnerable Liberal riding in an effort to usurp the seat. The riding is relatively new on the federal scene, having been carved out in 2003, and is also host to NDP candidate Jagtar Shergill and the Green Party’s Avtaar Soor.

“Today, more than half the riding’s residents are visible minorities—including a sizable South Asian community, which the Tories are wooing as part of their controversial strategy aimed at wresting ethnic votes from the Liberals.

“The riding made headlines earlier this month after it was reported that Snover Dhillon, a Toronto businessman facing fraud charges, was helping out with Mr. Seebach’s campaign.

“A telephone message left for Mr. Seebach was not immediately returned on Tuesday.”

That was from the National Post.

Then we go back over to the Joe Volpe campaign: “Joe Volpe Turfs Campaign Worker Caught Trashing Green Pamphlets.” I think we’ve heard a little bit of this already today in some of the debate.

“A Liberal Party volunteer has been dismissed after removing Green Party campaign flyers from mailboxes and replacing them with Liberal materials while door-knocking with Toronto incumbent Joe Volpe.

“The actions of an unidentified man canvassing with Mr. Volpe, who has long represented Eglinton–Lawrence, were captured in a series of photographs by a Green Party supporter on Friday.

“‘The moment that there is an indication that that sort of stuff happens, that’s it. I don’t engage in, I don’t

condone, I don’t encourage that kind of behaviour,’ Mr. Volpe said in an interview Monday.

“‘The canvasser’s no longer with us. End of story.’

“Despite the dismissal, Green candidate Paul Baker is preparing a complaint to Elections Canada, noting that Mr. Volpe was nearby when the flyers were trashed.

“‘What I guess disappoints us is that Joe was there.... He may not have been robbing the bank, but it seems he was driving the getaway car,’ he said. ‘In our minds, there’s no doubt that he was aware.’

“‘However, Mr. Volpe said he did not know of the volunteer’s actions at the time. ‘You leapfrog over each other. I go to a door, he goes to another door and another canvasser goes to another door. You work essentially in isolation.’” It sounds like Mr. Volpe knew nothing about these pamphlets disappearing.

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“Orla Hegarty, Mr. Baker’s volunteer campaign manager who took the photographs, claims that Mr. Volpe also removed Green Party pamphlets from mailboxes and replaced them with Liberal materials. She said she did not manage to photograph him doing so.

“‘It was just horrifying to me. I couldn’t believe I was seeing it,’ said Mrs. Hegarty, a part-time math and statistics college instructor. ‘They were both going along and removing the flyers.’

“Mr. Volpe strongly denied that he removed flyers. ‘I’ve never done anything like that and for that volunteer to say that is a complete falsity, complete fabrication,’ he said.

“Ms. Hegarty said she began taking photos after noticing Mr. Volpe’s handler throw away a Green flyer that she had distributed in the area earlier on Friday afternoon.

“Before leaving, Ms. Hegarty confronted Mr. Volpe and said he responded with a shrug. Mr. Volpe said he was unclear at the time what she was talking about.

“Mr. Volpe, who declined to provide the volunteer’s name, complained that his campaign has had ‘all kinds of dirty tricks played on us,’ including vandalism and theft of signs and harassing phone calls originating from the U.S.

“‘Now we’ve got Green Party trying to create another story. Well, we’ve got a campaign to run and we do it properly,’ he said.” We know how properly he did it; he lost.

It’s amazing. We’ve got these stories about the federal Liberal campaigns that basically, there’s all kinds of accusations. The reality is the Attorney General brought this Bill 196 in based on the federal election campaign. He didn’t want to see this happen provincially. I can show you examples of where it wasn’t the mean old Conservatives or the Green Party or the NDP; it was the Liberal Party that did the dirty work in these campaigns. They might have done the dirty work but the reality is, they were humiliated across the country, humiliated here in Ontario and in Quebec. Basically the federal Liberal Party hardly exists anymore and it will be a couple of years before they find a leader and all that sort of thing. I

think what this really was was a bit of a diversion. They're trying to draw attention that maybe the Liberals lost because all these mean-spirited people were working against them.

The reality is that Bill 195, Mr. Arnott's bill, was the kind of legislation this House really needs, the kind of positive influence on the election process it needs. We know the government turned that down. We know they were whipped into shape to make sure that they voted against a bill that impacted a group like the Working Families Coalition, and as a result of that, we're stuck with this time-allocated, undemocratic type of bill that we're going to bring forward in the next little while.

Anyhow, those are my comments today. I know the bill is time-allocated. I don't know when we're going to actually wrap this up, but I think that at some point, maybe after October 6, we'll go back and take a serious look at Mr. Arnott's bill, Bill 195.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Questions and comments?

Mr. Paul Miller: A quick comment on the presentation by the member from Simcoe North: I tend to agree with him on the timing of this bill. I agree with that. I've also said, how are they going to enforce this bill? Certainly there has not been a lot of enforcement in the past about fraudulent things in elections. They have trouble identifying the perpetrator, they have trouble identifying the time, they even sometimes have trouble identifying the location. They certainly don't have the people to enforce it. I guess it would be the police that would have to do it. The police are already telling us they're short hundreds of officers throughout the province provincially as well as in the municipalities. I don't know, really, how they're going to enforce this, how they're going to find the people who did it.

It's just another last-minute bill. We didn't really get to debate it enough. There's not a lot of input. It's time-allocated again. Here we go again: Another bill going through without proper debate. I'm sure there could have been some good input from the opposition parties but obviously we're not going to have that opportunity. We've got a couple of days to go until the end of the session.

Basically, once again, I think the democratic process in this province has been kicked in the teeth again because we are getting something rammed through again that we certainly haven't been able to debate. We feel, once again, that it's just a last-minute fix to make the people who lost federally feel better that something's being done because they feel they've been wronged in some way, shape or form in the election because they lost. That's what this all boils down to. It's unfortunate.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further comments and questions?

Mr. David Zimmer: The parties opposite are opposing this legislation, but what does the public think? So let me just—I've got some media releases here. Here's one dated May 26 from Metroland publications: "Those who follow politics know that dirty tricks have long been a

staple of US politics, where political views have traditionally been more polarized than in Canada. With a right-wing government holding a majority and a left-wing party moving into opposition in Ottawa, it appears Canada is poised for an increasing political divide and, potentially, more vicious elections."

Here is the important part of the quote: "Queen's Park is to be commended for taking steps against election fraud now, in advance of the October 6 vote. To allow dirty tricks to proceed unopposed is simply asking for trouble."

That's the point that I made in my earlier remarks.

What does the Guelph Mercury tell us? Now, that's a highly respected regional newspaper. On May 20, it said, "Bentley"—referring to the Attorney General—"wants the new law"—referring to this bill that's before us—"in place before the next provincial election, set for October 6.

"At first blush it seems a no-brainer that all parties would want to support—or at least be seen to be supporting—such an initiative.

"But they're not."

It quotes what various Tories said and what some NDP members said.

"But it does appear to acknowledge concerns shared by many Ontarians in the wake of" the May 2 federal election "and take steps to address those.

"The only people opposed to an effort to crack down on such underhanded tactics should be those who stand to gain from them."

That's what the public is thinking.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further comments?

Mr. Ted Arnott: I'm pleased to compliment the member for Simcoe North, who spoke very eloquently on this issue this afternoon, and just again draw the attention of the House to this nasty, nasty piece of work that was sent out by the Ontario Liberal Party the day that their Bill 196 was introduced. This is what they sent out all across the province on their so-called OLP Wire. "We saw American-style dirty tricks in the federal election by the federal Conservatives. Today we're introducing tough new legislation that will mean stiff fines and jail time if anyone breaks the rules during Ontario's election. Here's what you need to know"—and it goes on and on.

Then it says, "We know that the same people who ran the federal Conservative campaign are running rookie leader Tim Hudak's campaign.

"Right now it's looking like the Hudak PCs will try to block the passage of this legislation. Either way, we'll know by their actions where they stand and what their own plans are for the upcoming Ontario election."

The member for Willowdale just now indicated that he believes that the Conservative Party is voting against this legislation. In fact, a number of our speakers have repeatedly stated that we are not opposed to the principle of Bill 196, but at the same time, we would draw attention to Bill 195. Much of the government's arguments that

have been made in respect to Bill 196 are actually valid for Bill 195.

Bill 195, the bill I brought forward in the Legislature about 10 days ago with respect to election finances, is something that is in the public interest. I think most of the members who have thought about this listened to the debate this afternoon. I know some of them are probably checking with their consciences about this because they know full well that the arguments that we're making with respect to Bill 195 are sound and solid. Any fair-minded person listening to this debate would agree with that.

Unfortunately, the Liberals are relying on the Working Families Coalition to give them a boost now that they're down in the polls, and that's the only reason that they're opposed to Bill 195.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member for Guelph.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I'd be pleased to comment on the remarks by the member from Simcoe North. I think what has distressed me about this debate is the implication by the opposition that, "Oh, well, it's just dirty tricks. We always have people knock down signs. We always have people move them from one lawn to another. We always have sign-slashers. We always have people handing out literature that's negative to one candidate or another. This is just business as usual."

Well, what went on in the federal election was not just business as usual, and I would point out that it also has nothing to do with, "Oh, it's just sour grapes. Their federal cousins didn't get as many seats as they thought, so it's just sour grapes." Actually, the ridings in which the attempt to suppress the vote was the worst, the most offensive, were the ridings in which Liberals actually did the best. In fact, it's not sour grapes from my constituents that Liberals lost the riding; Liberals actually won the

riding. It's not just sour grapes; it was something that was substantively dirtier than the normal dirty tricks—if you can call dirty tricks normal—because I'm used to those in my campaign or in my seatmate's campaign. It was something that was different. It was deliberate election fraud aimed at trying to impede voters from voting.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member from Simcoe North has two minutes to respond.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I'd like to thank the members from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, Willowdale, Wellington–Halton Hills and Guelph for their comments on my speech a little earlier.

Look, the members opposite are not sure how we're voting on this bill, so they're trying to say that we're not supporting it, and they did so with that pathetic release they put out the day they introduced the bill. All we're trying to say here, and to sum this thing up: Yes, we know dirty tricks take place, and that bill, Bill 196, is a good step in the right direction. We're not saying that it's a bad thing; we're not saying that.

However, what we are trying to say is, why did you turn down Bill 195? For God's sake, what reason was there? It stopped third party advertising and collusion, and you turned it down. You were whipped into it. How can you possibly stand on that side of the House and criticize the provincial PC caucus or the federal Conservatives for anything when you turned Bill 195 down? You should be ashamed of yourselves for working with this Pat Dillon and this Working Families Coalition and the embarrassment they've brought to electioneering in the province of Ontario.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): It being past 6 of the clock, this House stands recessed until 6:45.

The House recessed from 1803 to 1845.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

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Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman, Tonia Grannum

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

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Aggelonitis, Hon. / L'hon. Sophia (LIB)	Hamilton Mountain	Minister of Revenue / Ministre du Revenu Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Arthurs, Wayne (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
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Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (LIB)	London West / London-Ouest	Attorney General / Procureur général Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
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Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Health Promotion and Sport / Ministre de la Promotion de la santé et du Sport
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Brown, Michael A. (LIB)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Brownell, Jim (LIB)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Caplan, David (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Carroll, Hon. / L'hon. Aileen (LIB)	Barrie	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism and Culture / Ministre du Tourisme et de la Culture
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Crozier, Bruce (LIB)	Essex	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (LIB)	Prince Edward–Hastings	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie

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Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (LIB)	Windsor–Tecumseh	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry / Ministre du Développement du Nord, des Mines et des Forêts
Hampton, Howard (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Hoy, Pat (LIB)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Johnson, Rick (LIB)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kormos, Peter (NDP)	Welland	Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
Kular, Kuldip (LIB)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Jean-Marc (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Leal, Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	
Levac, Dave (LIB)	Brant	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Cambridge	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Premier / Premier ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
McMeekin, Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	
Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Mitchell, Hon. / L'hon. Carol (LIB)	Huron–Bruce	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Moridi, Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	

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Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
Naqvi, Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
Oraziotti, David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pendergast, Leeanna (LIB)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (LIB)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
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Ramal, Khalil (LIB)	London–Fanshawe	
Ramsay, David (LIB)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Ruprecht, Tony (LIB)	Davenport	
Sandals, Liz (LIB)	Guelph	
Savoline, Joyce (PC)	Burlington	
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Monique M. (LIB)	Nipissing	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Sorbara, Greg (LIB)	Vaughan	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Sterling, Norman W. (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	Deputy Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de parti reconnu
Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Van Bommel, Maria (LIB)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
Wilkinson, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Perth–Wellington	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Zimmer, David (LIB)	Willowdale	
Vacant	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	

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Shafiq Qaadri, Khalil Ramal
Elizabeth Witmer
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Second Session, 39th Parliament

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 39^e législature

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Monday 30 May 2011

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Lundi 30 mai 2011



Speaker
Honourable Steve Peters

Clerk
Deborah Deller

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 30 May 2011

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 30 mai 2011

The House recessed from 1803 to 1845.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ENSURING INTEGRITY IN ONTARIO ELECTIONS ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 ASSURANT L'INTÉGRITÉ DES ÉLECTIONS EN ONTARIO

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 30, 2011, on the motion for second reading of Bill 196, An Act to amend the Election Act with respect to certain electoral practices / Projet de loi 196, Loi modifiant la Loi électorale en ce qui concerne certaines manœuvres électorales.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Thanks, Madam Speaker, That's why I came. I came just to debate this bill. It's an important bill, I'm told. It's a bill that came to our laps at the last moment. I've got to tell you that my friend from Welland made a couple of good points that I think are interesting, including some graphic stuff that I'd rather not repeat. Just untouchable. You were in the chair. I saw you.

Mr. Wayne Arthurs: The third party has arrived. Keep going. Don't stop.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: The third party is here. But I'm speaking; they can speak after.

He made a couple of useful comments that I think need to be repeated. This issue came at the last moment. But anything can come at the last moment. It's not a big deal, one might say. And the suspicion is that it came before us because the government had nothing else.

Mr. Pat Hoy: We've got a lot.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: You have a lot? I could see how much you have.

He was saying that the poor House leader was not informed about it because as far as she knew, there was nothing on the table. The member from Welland was not critical at all of the House leader. That's not what it was about. It was a question of the government, at the last moment, putting a bill on the table—and I suspect this is how it went: "We don't have anything. We need a filler. Does somebody have a bill?" And the Attorney General probably said, "I'll volunteer. I've got one." Something

like what students would do in high school. "I've got one." You must have been a teacher a long time ago.

Mr. Wayne Arthurs: I was, in my first life.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: You can tell who the teachers are sometimes.

This is how I think it went: The Attorney General said, "I'm volunteering. I've got a little bill to fill in," and here we are.

Again, the member from Welland said—and he didn't say, as I might say, that it's irrelevant. We have a bill before us, and it's irrelevant how it came about. The point is, we're debating it and we have a few remarks.

The member from Welland said that, normally, these kinds of bills usually have three parties working at it together. And he pointed out to the Attorney General—good to see you, parliamentary assistant, as well—"If this is so important, why wouldn't you get the three political parties seated together in committee, working this out, making sure that we do this in a non-partisan way and have all three political parties comment on what abuses might have happened at the provincial level, at the federal level?"

Interjection.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Except, you see, member from Brant, if it's a question of time, then you bring the bill earlier, much earlier. You don't bring it at the last moment. It's not the way it's done.

Mr. Dave Levac: But we didn't know these bad things were happening.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: No, you knew that. Come on. Please. We have known this stuff for quite a long time.

Mr. Dave Levac: Really?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Please. Member from Brant, you're joking with me, correct?

Mr. Dave Levac: Yes.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: The Attorney General would know—that's the language that lawyers use—that at the federal level, there have been hundreds of complaints, and they say that this time around there may be even more complaints registered with the government than before. But it's not unusual. It happens on a regular basis.

1850

Here we have an instance where the Liberals get whacked badly and the Liberals got concerned, because they have to make it appear as if these abuses were so bad that a number of Liberals would have been elected had we had a policy in place or a law in place—but you're right; it wouldn't have mattered at all. But it makes it appear that had these abuses occurred, and this

law were to have been in place, three, four, five, 10, 15, 20 Liberals MPs might have been saved. It's possible. I don't know.

Mr. Jeff Leal: And one NDPer.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: And one NDPer. In Manitoba—in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Jeff Leal: Yes, yes.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Ms. Blaikie, who lost by 26 or 40—

Mr. Jeff Leal: Saskatoon East.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Saskatoon East.

Interjection.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Please join me. The parliamentary assistant knew that I would be wearing this suit today, and that's why he decided he would wear the same suit. It's very becoming, isn't it? Please, please, have a seat.

Mr. David Zimmer: Oh, thank you.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Because you can't have two people standing at the same time, as far as I know.

So we know there have abuses in the past. This is not unusual. There have been a couple of instances this time around that have shaken the Liberal sensitivities. I understand that. So we have a bill.

Duff Conacher, coordinator of Democracy Watch, made a number of—

Interjection.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Duff Conacher, the coordinator of Democracy Watch, said that these abuses have happened in the past. He wonders why it is that charges have not been laid in the past—

Mr. Bob Delaney: Am I close enough?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Please, please.

Mr. Bob Delaney: Am I close enough?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: No. Please, have a seat.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I ask the members to come to order.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: If I were you, Madam Speaker, I would throw these two people out. When I become Speaker, this will become unacceptable—because I'm planning to run for Speaker in the next election, assuming the electorate re-elects me on October 6.

You can go now. Thanks very much.

Mr. Bob Delaney: But you see, you can't throw us out. We can sit here. You're stuck here.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I still have 13 minutes.

Madam Speaker, as I was saying, through you, of course, a number of these things might be prevented by this bill—I'm not quite sure. Unless the Criminal Code is changed, I am not certain that this bill will have the effect that is desired by the Attorney General. But who am I? He's a lawyer; I'm not. But some have said that unless you change the Criminal Code at the federal level to permit some of these abuses to be prosecuted, it may be difficult to get at this problemo. But as I say, who knows? But these are questions, mere questions.

Another question that the member from Welland raised is that the bill would make it illegal, with a fine of

up to \$25,000 and up to two years less a day in prison per offence, to impede or attempt to stop a citizen from voting by providing false information directly or indirectly, such as providing them with the incorrect polling station where they should be voting in a provincial election.

I was impressed with the argument that the member from Welland made, because he said that by directing them to another poll, does that impede them from voting? I thought it was a very sound argument. It makes it difficult, he argued. And, indeed, I would add, in your defence, as Liberals, that if this comes on a very late hour and they were, let us say, to be directed at 8:30 to somewhere where it might take half an hour to get to, they might not be able to get back in time. In such an instance, they would be impeded, I suppose one could argue, from voting. That could happen. But to simply misdirect them at 3 o'clock, 2 o'clock or 10 o'clock wouldn't prevent them from voting, would it? It wouldn't impede them from voting, would it?

Mr. Dave Levac: You're being too kind to the criminal activity.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: No, no, no—

Mr. Dave Levac: It's the intent.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: The question the member from Welland raised is that—I'm not sure that, legally, the word "impede" is correctly applied in an instance where people are directed to go elsewhere. But again, these are arguments, and these are arguments that would be made in a court of law—imagine, at some point—should this ever get to a court of law. Who knows? But I thought they were very interesting arguments.

The member from Welland also raised another interesting issue. He said, "Don't you, Attorney General, want to invite Mr. Essensa, the Chief Electoral Officer, to come and comment on this bill?" This would be his due, and you would think, as Liberal MPPs, you would find it part of due process to invite him and get his feedback—unless, of course, the Attorney General has already done that, has already called him up, they've had a discussion on the matter, the two agreed that this bill more than satisfies his concerns and everything is done. But I'm not quite sure the Attorney General would have done that, or anybody else in his staff, or anybody else who may have drafted this bill.

It seems to me, and correctly, that you would want to be able to have a hearing, as the member from Welland argued, for an hour, possibly two, in the morning or afternoon, and invite a couple of people, but particularly Mr. Essensa, to get his opinion on the matter just so that it can satisfy, if not our need for his input, then your desire to make sure that you consulted the right people on this particular bill. I thought it was a fair comment to make. You would want to make sure that you invite a couple of people who take an interest in these things, by way of input and feedback, making sure that it satisfies the concerns of Liberal parliamentarians, if no one else.

But whether or not this bill will do what it purports to do remains to be seen. Whether or not a fine in and of

itself, whether it's \$5,000 one day and \$25,000 another day—whether the amount is sufficient as a deterrent, I don't know. You would want to make sure that people actually feel that they're going to get caught. Does the fine of \$25,000 frighten them enough to feel that they will be caught? Are there enough processes in place to make sure that they will be prosecuted, and that in every polling station they will be reminded of the fact that should somebody be doing something illegal, not only will you have a \$25,000 fine, but you will be prosecuted and put into jail—

Mr. Jeff Leal: Part of a chain gang.

Mr. David Zimmer: Chain gang.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: —and be told that you will be working really hard to earn your keep for having caused a fraudulent act on the electorate.

I love the whole idea of a chain gang. It's just a funny little political thing that the Conservatives are doing. But it's a great political stunt, I've got to tell you. The whole idea of saying to the public, "You work hard. Criminals don't work hard; you know that. They're simply watching hockey or soccer on these big screens, guzzling beer, at your expense. No way, José. We Tories are going to get them out of there. We're going to make sure they work hard for a living, for the harm they have caused individuals and families and society. We're going to make sure they are out there, working hard." I love it, I love it. It's just beautiful politics, because there's a whole lot of people who just like that kind of politics.

It reminds me of the days when Mike Harris went after welfare recipients and said to the taxpayers—not to the citizens, but to the taxpayers—"You work hard for your living."

Mr. Jeff Leal: Those bums.

1900

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Yes. They said, "Those welfare bums, they don't work; they're just taking your hard-earned money, drinking it away, guzzling it away, spending it on expensive cabs to go here and thither," and so on and so forth. It worked—a beautiful campaign. You guys are good. You guys are really good. I've got to give it to you. I wish we could do that kind of politics and get away with it. Unfortunately, we can't.

The point is, if you really want to prevent abuses, you've really got to make it a big campaign, I suspect. You've got to make sure that whenever there is a provincial election or a federal election, you announce over the radio, in the newspapers, on television that there are going to be these \$25,000 fines, that there are people watching you in every corner, in every polling station, that there are people who are snooping in on your emails, who know that you are about to commit fraud, and, "We're going to put you away."

Mr. Jeff Leal: Chain gang.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: On the chain gang, yes. But if you're not doing that kind of stuff, okay, you could make it 100,000 bucks. Why not just say, "We're going to fine you with a \$100,000 penalty"? Why don't you just

say that? Make it big. Don't give it such a small little sum for a fraudulent act or an illegal act. Make it big.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: But \$25,000 is large.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Is it \$100,000?

Mrs. Liz Sandals: It's going up to \$25,000.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: How much? From \$5,000 to \$25,000. I already said that.

That's a good thing: Whenever you want to make it appear like you're really tough on crime, you just increase the amount and you've done it: "We've done the job." You increase the amount and that's it. Now everybody can go home, no more fraud and everybody will be honest, good citizens. I don't know.

One of the other points that was raised is, if a crime happens outside of the country in terms of the illegal activity, can you actually prosecute them provincially?

Mr. Phil McNeely: Get the planes for that.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Planes?

Mr. Phil McNeely: The jets.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Jets. Maybe.

But my point is, if someone outside of the country is committing a fraudulent act, a crime of sorts, can you get after them legally, provincially? Do we have the jurisdiction? I'm not sure whether the Attorney General spoke to that. Have you? Did you? You can? Is that what you're saying with your thumb up?

You see, Madam Speaker, he wasn't even listening. Do you see how disrespectful that was? How he treats us with contempt and arrogance, as if we don't matter? Come on, Chris. How could you do that? You should be listening to me. I'm offended. We're buddies. I'm always thinking you're listening to what I have to say. He wasn't listening. I'm sad.

Anyway, to repeat the question, Attorney General, if somebody commits a crime, and they are, let's say, in the States or in India, wherever it might be, connected to election fraud, do you have the jurisdiction to go after them?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: Absolutely.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Did you say yes?

Interjection: Put them in jail.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I know the idea is to put them in jail, I understand that. But do you have the jurisdiction to go after them?

Mr. John Yakabuski: Rosie, stop asking them questions. If you want answers, talk to me.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: That would be the better thing to do. Instead of—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I would just remind the member to speak through the Chair.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Do you see what I mean? You should be talking to the Chair if you want to address me. You've got to speak to the Chair and say you want to address me.

But there are no hearings, and in my mind that's shameful. This came at the last moment, and it's shameful. Rarely have we seen a case where a bill gets presented and you don't open it up for debate, you don't invite people to come and speak to it—rarely. So that's

shameful. We haven't invited Mr. Essensa, the Chief Electoral Officer, to come and give input, and that is shameful.

But in the end, what am I going to say, that I'm opposed to this little bill? No.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: The right to votes is little?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Oh, this is big. You're right. This is really big. You're absolutely right. This is big stuff. You're absolutely right. Sorry; I underrated the extent of the importance of this bill.

So the idea is to make it illegal, with a fine up to \$25,000, up to two years, to impede or attempt to stop a citizen from voting, impersonate or ask someone to impersonate an election official—okay. Direct or hire someone or a company to commit—okay. Penalties for existing offences—okay.

So there, we've done it. I'll be supporting the bill in spite of some of the concerns that we have raised.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Comments and questions?

Mr. David Zimmer: I've been debating this now for a couple of days, a couple of hours, and I have to pick up on the member opposite's last comment, that he will be supporting this bill, because in my various comments I have issued the challenge. I have said, how can anyone in this chamber, be they Liberal, Conservative or NDP, object to this piece of legislation which enhances, strengthens and places on a more solid foundation voting rights and ensures that voting practices are unimpeded? That's good for the voters of Ontario; that's good for the reputation of democracy in Ontario.

I would not have expected less of the member opposite. He is a thoughtful person. He's got an earned Ph.D., not an honorary Ph.D. He has studied rigorously. I've seen some of his academic work. He doesn't know that I've seen it, but I dug up his thesis a number of years ago. He is very capable of a sustained and deep intellectual analysis and so I'm not at all surprised that, notwithstanding his suggestions about the bill, how he would like to tweak it, in the last analysis he knows it's a good thing. He knows it's going to build on Ontario's continuing reputation for democracy.

I know he has a lot of new Canadians in his riding and I dare say a number of them—I'm speculating now—have spoken to him, saying, "We want to ensure that we have unimpeded democratic rights in Ontario. That's not something that we have experienced in the jurisdictions from whence we have come." I rather expect that the member has picked up on that. So thank you, member opposite.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further comments?

Mr. John Yakabuski: It's interesting that at the last moment the Liberal government brings forth this bill and they somehow feel that democracy has been short-changed up until this time. Of course, they brought this out and then accused the federal Conservatives of voting irregularities in the last federal election. Unbelievable.

The only thing I saw that we know was wrong in the federal election—these are just supposed, possible,

maybe, we're-not-sure incidents, but we saw Joe Volpe. I don't know. Did Joe Volpe get re-elected? No, I think the people gave him his penalty. He should have got a \$25,000 fine, maybe on top of that, when he was reaching into the mailboxes and stealing the literature of other candidates.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: He's got a good pension now.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Yes, Joe's got a good pension. Maybe he can read some of those election flyers now and realize what he did wrong.

But the other thing is that the government here had the opportunity to do something that was really vital for democracy, and that is to prevent collusion between themselves and a third party called Working Families Coalition. They had a chance to do that. If they wanted to do something that really, actually makes democracy work and makes elections true and honest, and then makes the financing of elections real, so that if money is being spent to promote a particular party or to try to knock down another, that goes against the financing expenditures of that party that they are colluding with, they could have done that. But no, this is what they bring up, which is, if you prevent somebody from getting to the polls to vote—you know what that's called? It's called kidnapping. It's called unlawful detention. We already have laws on the books to prevent that.

This is a joke that we are wasting our time on when we could have been bringing forth the Hawkins Gignac Act, Bill 69. And you want no committee on this? Disgraceful.

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The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further comments?

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I'm pleased to comment on the speech by the member from Trinity-Spadina.

We got off on to a little bit of a tangent there with the proposals from the official opposition to have convicted criminals working in the community and neighbourhood parks and things. But what did actually come out of that is that the member from Trinity-Spadina is quite accurate in saying, yes, that would be a possible penalty for violating this particular bill. The penalty for committing election fraud, for committing corrupt practices, as it's called in the bill, has actually been increased to two years less a day, which would land you in a provincial jail. And I suppose if the Conservatives were to get their way, that would land you on a Tim gang.

The other thing that's maybe useful to comment on is the question around what happens in other jurisdictions. In fact, when the Ministry of the Attorney General looked at other jurisdictions, under the Elections Canada act, under the acts in other provinces, impersonating the Chief Electoral Officer for whatever jurisdiction or Elections Canada equivalents in other provinces is already illegal. Ontario is actually the only province where the sort of fraud that we saw on federal election day is not illegal. We are actually filling a gap—which exists in every other provincial election law.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further comments?

Mr. Norm Miller: We're certainly not opposed to Bill 196, but it's a last-moment bill, as the member from Trinity-Spadina pointed out, that came out mysteriously the day after the member from Wellington-Halton Hills brought out his Bill 195, which really was addressing a serious problem. It was addressing the problem of third party advertising. In the case of Ontario, we are different with third party advertising than the other provinces. Other provinces have rules about how much groups like the Working Families Coalition can spend on advertising but outside of the election rules. Ontario does not. So if they really wanted to do something, they could amend this bill. Of course, now they've time-allocated it, so they won't be able to amend it because it's not going to committee.

It's more a PR stunt than anything else, when you read this wire thing the Liberals sent out when they announced this bill. This is the release they did: "We saw American-style dirty tricks in the federal election by the federal Conservatives. Today we're introducing tough new legislation that will mean stiff fines and jail time if anyone breaks the rules during Ontario's election. Here's what you need to know"—and they go on and on. There are going to be \$25,000 fines—I wouldn't quantify it as a nasty email they sent out. I certainly question how true it is.

The only thing that was true in the federal election was Joe Volpe's campaigning on the street and stealing Green Party campaign folders and leaving Liberal Party folders. That's what was reported in the *Globe and Mail*:

"A Liberal Party volunteer has been dismissed after removing Green Party campaign flyers from mailboxes and replacing them with Liberal materials while door-knocking with Toronto incumbent Joe Volpe...."

"What I guess disappoints us is that Joe was there.... He may not have been robbing the bank, but it seems he was driving the getaway car."

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member for Trinity-Spadina has two minutes to respond.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I'd like to thank all my friends for their comments.

I just want to repeat a couple of things that I already said. I think it's unfortunate that bills of this nature—even if they're not as complex as we would think they are, they ought to be brought to this Legislature in a timely way. They should. These kinds of bills deserve the feedback of all three political parties, again in a timely way, so that we all feel good about how we're dealing with potential abuses, election fraud and corrupt practices during an election. I think everybody can point to an abuse done by some worker in every political party, and that is why you want to make sure that you involve all three political parties in finding the solutions that we can all agree on.

So for this party to bring this bill at the last moment—it just doesn't look good on you, that's all. The fact that we don't have any hearings does not look good on you.

The fact that you bring time allocation because you don't want anybody commenting on the bill does not look good on you at all. The fact that you don't bring the Chief Electoral Officer to comment, or anybody else who feels they have a stake in this, including such people as Duff Conacher, the coordinator of Democracy Watch, who I know has commented on election fraud at the federal level—I am convinced he has ideas, commentary, criticisms about what is happening provincially and how we could fix that. There are a number of people who would want to come and speak to this bill. By not inviting the Chief Electoral Officer, it looks bad on you as well. Is the bill bad in what it says? No. But, please, the process was really bad.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I'm very pleased to rise and join the debate on Bill 196, Ensuring Integrity in Ontario Elections Act. I'm obviously very pleased to support it, because the right to vote is a fundamental human right, it's a constitutional right and it's the foundation of a true democracy. Without the right to vote, there is no democracy.

During the recent federal election, Elections Canada received numerous reports from voters in Ontario and other provinces about phone calls from persons falsely claiming to be from Elections Canada, directing them to vote at incorrect polling stations or presumed polling stations. What we've heard from the opposition here earlier this afternoon is, "Ah, just standard dirty tricks. Everybody has dirty tricks. No big deal. Why are you making a fuss? Why are you changing the law?"

I want to tell you what it was like in Guelph. If I can put things in perspective, Guelph is not a place in which dirty tricks are unknown. If you go back to the federal election, the last one, which we were trying to date—I think it was fall 2008—there were Liberal supporters who had their brake lines cut. There were people with lawn signs who had anti-Liberal graffiti spray-painted on their house. So Guelph is not a jurisdiction in which dirty tricks—

Interjection.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: It was reported to the police, and the police investigated, thank you very much. So Guelph is not a place in which dirty tricks are unknown.

Roll forward to the week before this spring's federal election campaign. My seatmate, Frank Valeriote, did win so this is not about sour grapes. The Liberal candidate did ultimately win. But the week before the election, his campaign office started to get reports from people who were calling in and saying, "Look, I support Frank, I want to vote for Frank, but will you please stop with the calls?" It turned out that somebody purporting to represent Frank was calling known supporters' houses very frequently late at night and disturbing the people and keeping them awake. Now, maybe you think that's funny on the other side, but the people who live in Guelph don't really think that if you say, "Gee, I support somebody," you should have people calling in the middle of the night and waking you up. That seems unreasonable.

We also had people impersonating known Liberals. For example, you would pick up your phone and somebody would say, "Hi, I'm so-and-so," a known Liberal, "and I'm supporting Marty Burke. I hope you will too." Marty Burke was the Conservative candidate. And before you tell me that was hearsay, I was in the kitchen when my husband got just such a call. So don't tell me I'm making it up; I'm not. That's what it was like the week before. I did check with the known Liberal after she came back from being a Liberal scrutineer, and no, she didn't place the call. I checked it out.

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Go forward to election day: About an hour after the polls opened, Frank's campaign office started to get calls from people who couldn't figure out where they were supposed to vote. The reason they couldn't figure out where they were supposed to vote was, they had gotten what people call a robocall, one of these things that places automatic calls. The automatic call said, "I'm from Elections Canada. There's been a really high voter turnout, so your poll has been moved and you're to go to Old Quebec Street." That may not be totally verbatim, but if you'd like to hear the verbatim call, you can check out CBC Radio, because lots of people in Guelph got this on an answering machine, and in fact, the calls that were on the answering machine have been turned over to Elections Canada and the police.

Where they were being directed was to some place called Old Quebec Street. Old Quebec Street is the downtown mall in Guelph. There were no polls at the downtown mall in Guelph, which meant that people would go to the mall and wander around the mall in vain trying to find a poll. There was no poll, which is why they started calling the candidate's campaign office, saying, "Where's the poll?" Then they started calling the local Guelph returning office, saying, "Where's the poll?" At which point the Guelph returning office of Elections Canada found out that there was a problem.

The Liberal candidate ended up at Old Quebec Street, and Elections Canada ended up at Old Quebec Street at the mall. Both Elections Canada and the Liberal candidate were wandering up and down the mall, trying to find people who were lost and explaining to them what was going on, that in fact they should be back at their original polling station.

There were enough calls that Elections Canada actually put notices on the local radio station to try and get the word out to people that Elections Canada was not placing any calls, and in fact, by noon it was on national CBC Radio telling people, because it turned out that Guelph was not the only riding in Canada in which this happened.

This was very definitely a concerted effort. By whom? You're absolutely right; we don't know. There have been official complaints lodged by the Liberal Party in Guelph and the Green Party in Guelph to Elections Canada, and presumably Elections Canada is investigating.

Of course I was working on the campaign that day, so I would start talking to people about who was getting the

call and who wasn't, because clearly, not all voters were getting the call. There was one situation where I was driving somebody to the poll and the people I was driving to the poll said, "Gee, Liz, we got this call, but now we've heard on the radio that we should ignore the call," and I said, "Yes, that's fine. I'm taking you to the original poll. No problem." I said, "Did you talk to any pollsters and tell them you were a Liberal?" "Oh yes, and I got a sign on the lawn that says I'm a Liberal." Then we started to check out the people calling in to Frank's office. Yes, everybody I talked to who had gotten a call had in some way identified themselves as a Liberal. Presumably some had also identified themselves as Green, because Green Party supporters had the same problem. But anybody I talked to who had gotten a call had in some way identified themselves, either by a lawn sign or to a pollster, as a Liberal. I actually at one point during the day took a jacket in to the cleaners to get cleaned. The young man who was in the cleaners said, "Oh, hi, I'm going to vote later." He was all excited. I think this might have been the first time he'd actually gotten to vote, and he was really thrilled. He wanted to take my picture. So we did the BlackBerry thing and got—

Mr. Jeff Leal: Oh, you got lots of BlackBerry pictures.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Yes. This one was of two faces. We got a BlackBerry picture. I thought, "Well, this is really interesting that he recognized me. I wonder if he's a Liberal." But he had also gotten a fake call, his family. So I asked, "Did you ever talk to a pollster?" Even this young man at the dry cleaners who had gotten a call had talked to a pollster and identified himself as a Liberal.

The members opposite may think that this is all a figment of our imagination, but I want to assure them that it is not a figment of our imagination. Liberals were being targeted. Green voters were being targeted. Do I know who was doing the targeting? No. I just know who was being targeted.

The reaction in Guelph has been extraordinarily negative in terms of people being very upset that they were being misdirected as to where it was that they should go to vote. They were extraordinarily offended that somebody, albeit unknown, was trying to get them to a place where they wouldn't know where to vote and they might miss their opportunity to vote.

Now, the NDP, the third party, have raised the issue of, okay, this wasn't a good thing to do, but was their vote actually impeded? Well, I would suggest to you that, yes, it was. It was impeded in different circumstances in two different ways. There were the people who went to the mall, who wandered around the mall, couldn't find a poll, didn't happen to run into a worker from Elections Canada to get redirected back to the poll they belonged at and in fact did lose their opportunity to vote because they were in a place where there was no poll. There was nobody to say, "Go back there," unless they happened to stumble on the Elections Canada worker, and I don't know how long the Elections Canada worker stayed at the mall. But there were clearly people who went to the

wrong place, didn't realize what was going on, didn't realize they were a victim of fraud and who really never got to vote.

There was a second category of people—and my own campaign manager, who was working as a scrutineer at one of the polls, said that just as the poll was closing, somebody came running into the poll, out of breath and very upset because they had gotten home from work, had missed all the flap on the radio, picked up their answering machine and got this message that said to go to the mall. They had been wandering around an empty mall and finally somebody had said to them, “Oh, you need to go back to the regular poll.” This was at the other end of town, so they just made it back. What we don't know is how many people never made it back to where they belonged.

So in answer to the opposition asking, “Was anybody really stopped from voting? Did this really do any harm?” the answer is clearly yes. Number one, the intent was to prevent people from voting, and the outcome was that people were prevented from voting. So in response to people, yes, this was a problem.

So what the act does: If passed, the proposed changes would add two new offences to the corrupt practices section of the Election Act and raise the penalties for the existing corrupt practices.

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The first new provision would create an offence for a person inside or outside of Ontario to attempt to impede or interfere with another person's exercise of the vote or prevent that person from voting in an Ontario provincial election, which is this robo-message that said to go to the wrong place. The second new provision would make it an offence to impersonate an election official, an employee or agent of Elections Ontario, a candidate or a representative of a candidate, constituency association or political party—which was my other example of somebody who was known to be associated, in this case with the Guelph Liberals, and somebody who was impersonating that person and trying to change voter intent.

The penalties for all corrupt practices—there are other existing corrupt practices in the act—are being changed from \$5,000 to a maximum of \$25,000, and from a maximum jail term of six months to a maximum of two years less a day, which we've discussed earlier, those penalties.

So I would just like to thank the Attorney General for responding very quickly to an issue that was obviously not an issue before May 2, because I am not aware ever in Guelph or anywhere else in Ontario of where this deliberate impersonation of Elections Canada or Elections Ontario, as the case may be, and the deliberate large-scale diversion of voters or attempt to divert voters to a non-existent poll has ever taken place. Yes, this legislation has come in late in the session, but it's quite frankly because we didn't know that there was a problem or a gap until late in the session.

I'd like to close by reflecting on what the Guelph Mercury said on May 20 in a column by Scott Tracey, and I really do believe that this reflects opinion in

Guelph. The item is called “Jury of One: Election Bill Not Perfect, But Still Worthy of All Parties' Support.”

“The provincial government's latest initiative makes me kind of embarrassed for society as a whole.

“Have we really got to the point that we need legislation to ensure people don't screw around with elections”—that's what it says here: Don't screw around with elections—“and with each other's ability to participate in them?”

“Apparently so.” Then he goes on to describe the legislation.

“We heard loud and clear about the allegations during the recent federal election and thought our law should contain the appropriate protections,” Bentley said in defending the act.

“These allegations included automated telephone calls to voters in select centres, including Guelph, wrongly informing voters their polling station had been changed to one across town, apparently aimed at frustrating voters and preventing them from casting their ballots.”

He then goes on to note that “Elections Canada is still investigating these calls, which landed Guelph on the national stage after CBC Radio focused its story on the issue here.”

Then it notes that “Bentley wants the new law in place before the next provincial election, set for October 6.”

Scott Tracey goes on to say, “At first blush it seems a no-brainer that all parties would want to support—or at least be seen to be supporting—such an initiative.

“But they're not.

“Ted Chudleigh, a Tory MPP”—and his riding is relatively close to Guelph—“and justice critic”—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Remember to use the riding names.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Halton? Just plain Halton?

“Ted Chudleigh”—sorry, the Halton MPP, a Tory. Is that okay?

Interjection: Is that Ted Chudleigh?

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Yes—“and justice critic, complained the bill appears ‘quickly slapped together’ and suggested it is odd the Liberals would craft a law based on ‘unproven allegations.’”

The member from Welland—that one I changed for you—“said the proposed law ‘came right out of the blue’ and added introducing new legislation so close to the end of the current parliamentary session is ‘not the smoothest move in the world.’

“But,” the article goes on to say, “if we accept the impetus for the legislation that was the federal election shenanigans of less than three weeks ago, then obviously the proposal would be ‘quickly slapped together’ and ‘right out of the blue.’

“Neither of those things makes the Ensuring Integrity in Ontario Elections Act a bad idea.

“And if” the member whom I can't name “continues to believe the allegations of vote tampering are ‘unproven’ I'm sure we can arrange for him to hear the recording of the robocall from the bogus Elections Canada official.

"Bentley's bill is not a panacea for shady campaigning, and those engaged in the business of winning elections will continue to find a way to give themselves and their chosen candidates an edge...."

But "the only people opposed to an effort to crack down on such underhanded tactics should be those"—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Questions and comments?

Mr. John Yakabuski: I listened intently to the address from the member from Guelph. I remember riding names. Look: She is quoting from the Mercury. It didn't say that either of those members quoted, either the member from Halton or the member from Welland, was opposing the bill. They were somewhat flummoxed as to why this government would be wasting this legislature's time when they could have been doing some other pieces of legislation; for example, the Hawkins Gignac Act, Bill 69, that would put carbon monoxide detectors in all homes, which our member from Oxford has brought forward. The government House leader keeps going on about this song and dance, saying that she is prepared to move it forward, but every time we raise the issue—

Hon. Monique M. Smith: If the Conservative House leader brought it forward.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Hey, the House leader's right here. Can we have unanimous consent to move that third reading without debate? I'll ask for that right now if she will do it, but she won't. Yet we've got a bill here that—and you know what she said to me? She said, "It has to go to committee." Yet, Mr. Speaker, here is a bill on which they have just tabled time allocation to move this ahead without committee. As my friend from Trinity-Spadina said, you would think you would want the electoral officer, Elections Ontario, to at least have a chance to comment on the bill. No. The man from Trinity-Spadina is right, but no, let's have no committee, third reading. I say the same thing for Bill 69. Let's move it, third reading, no debate. Let's protect people in their homes in this province instead of—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. The member from Trinity-Spadina.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: The member from Guelph made a number of good arguments in defence of her bill, the Attorney General's bill, and she makes reference to how some presenter talked about, "Imagine that even in this country you've got to have laws to deal with election irregularities." Of course you've got to have laws, because it doesn't matter where you are, whatever country you're in, there's going to be fraud. There are going to be election irregularities. There are going to be corrupt practices all over the world. You've got to introduce laws that attempt to deal with them. Whether they are dealt with is another matter, but you need strong laws.

We know that in 2008, federally, there were 500 complaints that were lodged. What we don't know is whether any of those 500 complaints were actually resolved—or dealt with, for that matter. But irrespective, you still need strong laws to deal with or attempt to deal with election irregularities.

But what I want the member from Guelph to comment on is, does she believe that it would have been helpful to have had three parties work on this particular bill? Does she believe that it would have been helpful to have had some hearings? I'm not saying weeks, as New Democrats used to do in 1990, or months, as we used to do in 1990, but a mere hour, possibly, maybe even an afternoon. Does she think it would have been helpful at all? Does she believe it would have been helpful to have invited the Chief Electoral Officer, Mr. Essensa, to come and give an opinion? These things she doesn't comment on at all. She makes a defence of the bill in terms of irregularities and the fact that we've got to do it, but no—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Questions and comments?

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Hon. Monique M. Smith: It's my privilege to stand and discuss Bill 196 today, but also to just have a little moment to rebut a bit of what my friend from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke had to say.

This bill is moving forward at quite a clip, and is the result of things that happened in the federal campaign which simply concluded on May 2, and therefore we had to move forward quickly in order to ensure that we don't have similar situations happening in the provincial election in October.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I would have let the minister speak.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Order.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: Rosie, I listened to you.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Riding names, please.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: Member for Trinity-Spadina.

But I did want to speak for a moment to the comments from the member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke and the bill which he referred to as the Hawkins Gignac Act. As I have clearly stated on a number of occasions in this House and out of this House, I am very supportive of Mr. Hardeman's bill with respect to carbon monoxide detectors in homes. I asked that the House leader for the Conservative Party bring it forward to the House leaders' meetings on a number of occasions. He failed to do so. As everyone in this House knows, there is a process with respect to—

Mr. John Yakabuski: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I can produce a letter to the government House leader specifically asking to move that bill forward. What's she's saying is absolutely false.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. I would just ask the honourable member to withdraw that comment, the accusation levelled against another member.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Withdrawn.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): No.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: It wasn't my point of order; I get my time back?

Interjection.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: Mr. Speaker, I'll take another two minutes at another time then, but I would like to say with respect to Bill 69 that the House leader for the Conservative Party was very clear on what the process was with respect to private members' bills. The families in North Bay know that I firmly support this bill. They also know that I feel it needs to go to committee, and therefore—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. The member for Parry Sound–Muskoka.

Mr. Norm Miller: Well, Mr. Speaker, I say to the House leader that this bill, Bill 196, the one we're debating, should be going to committee, but they just brought in a time allocation motion, which I assume they are going to be calling in probably the next day, and there's no committee for it.

On Bill 69, as our House leader has pointed out, we have a letter that he's willing to provide that states that he has brought it forward to get it to third reading. We'd like to see this Hawkins Gignac bill, which would require carbon monoxide detectors in all homes, passed. The government has been making it look like the opposition is stalling. It was an opposition member who introduced it. I know I have the Gignac family in Parry Sound that would very much like to see this bill become law, and it would of course save lives across the province.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I thought we were supposed to be speaking to the topic at hand. I'm not sure how a piece of legislation that's not before the House, not relevant to the discussion, somehow deserves a two-minuter on this particular topic, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I thank the honourable member for his comments. I would prefer this discussion to take place at a House leaders' level and not take place during the course of debate, but it was raised by the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. The government House leader chose to interject on it. The member from Parry Sound–Muskoka has made comment on it. As I say, these are issues that I don't think should be debated in this chamber. They should be debated at a House leaders' meeting.

Member for Parry Sound–Muskoka.

Mr. Norm Miller: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

It is relevant to this bill because, as has been pointed out, they are giving as justification for not calling this Bill 69 that it needs to go to committee, and yet the bill before us they are time-allocating and it won't be going to committee. So it is very relevant to the discussion this evening.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. The member from Guelph has two minutes to respond.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I'm a little distressed that the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke apparently isn't concerned about election fraud and got us off on that tangent that has absolutely nothing to do with election fraud. So I'm going to address the comments from

the member for Trinity–Spadina, because the member from Trinity–Spadina actually did—

Interjections.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: The member from Trinity–Spadina—

Interjections.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I can help to facilitate an early exit for any member who maybe desires to go home this evening.

Member from Guelph.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Thank you.

I totally agree with the member from Trinity–Spadina that we do need to have strong electoral laws and that time will prove how effective they are. But when there is a clear case of an attempted election fraud, we need to have laws to handle that. In an ideal world, I also agree with the member from Trinity–Spadina that it would be much more preferable to have this go to public hearings and to have it go to clause-by-clause and take a little bit more careful look at the proposed legislation, but we couldn't control the timing of the federal election. The problem did not arise until the federal election in the first week of May. We have responded as quickly as was possible to protect Ontario voters' right to vote, and that is what we want to do.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Further debate?

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette: I don't know if I have a privilege to speak about the bill or not. I mean, here we are debating about a number of issues that, quite frankly, in the weeks leading up to the end of the House—we're talking about issues where those individuals who are watching the debate would be questioning what we're actually talking about here and the real reason that we're in here discussing this.

I brought a colleague out from Oshawa, and he said, "What are you guys debating that for? What is the big importance of those issues?" I just got off the phone with Bonnie Annis, and her large concern is midwifery. There are a lot of greater things to do, and here we stand and debate issues such as this. Constituents wonder why we are debating this, and yet the Attorney General says we're doing these things to bring more people to get out and vote. Well, it's when we do things like this and we talk about these issues and diverge away from the actual issue that we're debating that people go, "What do I want to get out there and vote for this for?"

We need to stand up and be respectful in everything that we're talking about.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: The issue is—

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette: The issue is—the member is talking about this and wants to interrupt me, and that's just fine. But I'll tell you something: This has gone on with elections year after year after year. It's something that's not going to change. So we bring forward this bill here now, and it's going to resolve the issue? No, quite frankly. You want to know what's going to happen? The individuals who are going to do this will continue to do this, in the first place, and not only that, what they'll do is

they'll go outside the guidelines of the bill and do it before the election starts, which isn't taken into consideration here in any way, shape or form. So now you're going to have these individuals—and we experienced it in the federal election in our riding in Oshawa, whereby the individuals were called up and asked if they'd like to buy an election sign or vote online. Those are the sorts of things that are happening and going on on a regular basis. And I have some concerns with those, yes. But we need to focus on this issue and talk about those things.

I'd be happy to stand up here and talk about the fact that I've got a bill out there that I've tried to introduce three times now over a number of Parliaments, trying to help protect kids in sport. Do you think I can get the support to move it through? No.

The thing I'm trying to focus on is that we need to bring this to a level. If we want people to get out there and vote for us and stand up for what we believe in, we have to let people know where we stand on issues. I don't see any opposition to this bill. If there's no opposition to the bill, why are we debating it? Why don't we move forward, vote on it and move to the next issue where we can get to the issues people are concerned with? Our chief government whip has made it very clear that he was supporting it. So did the third party, at that particular time. If that's the case, what do we need to go on for? What do we need to bring in motions for adjournment for? There are a lot of other things that we can change, and if we want to talk about these things, we can talk about them in a fashion that will quite possibly address them a little bit better.

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The Attorney General mentioned a number of things, and a concern was about what happens when they go outside the province of Ontario. He mentioned the fact that we have the authority—I don't necessarily personally believe that we have the authority—to approach those individuals outside the jurisdiction of the province of Ontario to ensure it doesn't happen. I sit back and wonder why we're debating these things at the time we are, at the level that we are, to try and find out the intention. Quite possibly, "There are other issues that we'd rather not be talking about. We'd rather not be talking about a number of issues which come up in question period on a regular basis, so we have to find a cause to come forward. Let's get them focused on something else." If it is the case that there are rampant actions happening in elections that are causing individuals disruption, let's work on it. Let's get it resolved and let's move it forward.

I can't see that a lot of this debate on what's happening here is advantageous or inspiring individuals to participate in political actions and activities. Quite frankly, I think it may work the opposite and may deter individuals into wondering why they're getting involved in the first place.

I think there are a lot of things going on in the province of Ontario. We brought forward a bill that could effectively bring forward committee work to work on

health care and education. I established a bill that would bring a public accounts that would target two specific ministries where in excess of 62.8% of the provincial budget is occupied. And the Auditor General doesn't have the time to focus on the areas of largest concern. Quite frankly, I think we should move forward on that. There are a great number of things that we can move forward on as individuals and as people.

But I'm not so certain that this is an area that a lot of the public are concerned with. If you look at section 2 of the bill, section 92 of the specific act, it says, "Every deputy returning officer or poll clerk who wilfully miscounts the ballots or otherwise wilfully makes up a false statement of the poll is guilty of a corrupt practice and is liable to a fine of not more than \$25,000...." Quite frankly, if that's not in there now, I'm amazed that somebody working in a polling station would have that ability to mislead individuals or purposely miscount what has taken place.

Some of the other things, as the people who are watching would know, is that there are some concerns as to what you mean by "miscount." If it's that the check mark or the X is outside the box, is it a clear intent? I think that's what's looked at: Is there a clear intent to vote for or support one particular individual? You have to define some of those things, and then maybe come down to the courts, which takes, as the Attorney General knows, an extended period of time in order to ensure that the intention comes out. Because when the laws are brought forward and are acted upon through the courts to make sure that they're just, we try to find out what is the intent.

Some of the things that I brought forward are of concern—there were a number of issues brought forward. I know the member from the third party was talking about welfare rolls. What do welfare rolls have to do with this particular bill? When he spoke about some of the other policy issues that came up—people are campaigning already. Let's focus on what we're designed to do, and that is to make sure that we're best representing the constituents in each of our ridings. We need to focus on that which they're concerned with. Bonnie Annis is concerned about midwifery. There are a lot of other individuals who have specific concerns. The individuals I was with yesterday are concerned about cancer.

I know my colleague the House leader would like to share some time with me, and at this time I believe I'll share some time with my colleague.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I appreciate the member for Oshawa—not only his very correct and reasoned comments, but also his sharing his time with me at this time.

I just wanted to touch a little bit on some of the things that the member for Guelph was talking about: the destruction of signs and the defacing of signs. That's against the law now. There's not an issue there; it's against the law. If you remove somebody's election signs or you deface them, it's against the law now. We didn't need this new law for this. This is all politicking here.

You know, as long as there has been voting—politics and shenanigans and dirty tricks have been intrinsically linked since we've had voting.

I'll tell you how we became Conservatives in my family. Polish Catholics, which is my background on my father's side—obviously not my mother; she was of Irish descent—were traditionally Liberal voters. Maybe the stereotyping doesn't apply anymore, or the traditional patterns don't apply anymore, but my grandfather was working as a ranger in Algonquin park back in the early 1900s, and up until that time he was a Liberal voter too. But when he was asked by a Liberal organizer and offered money for his vote, that was when my grandfather vowed—vowed—that he would never again vote Liberal. So my father grew up in a Conservative home, even though many of his cousins were Liberals, because they were still voting by the traditional patterns. But that's what my grandfather believed: that if you couldn't do it honestly, then you didn't deserve his vote. And from that time on, that section of the Yakabuski family voted Conservative.

The reason I talk about that—and I hope I can finish my time, because I am losing my voice for some reason, so I'm going to try to remain calm. So—where was I, Speaker? Yes, losing my voice. I'm losing my train of thought.

Let's get back to the bill. The point I'm making is that we've had problems associated with elections and voting and irregularities and dirty tricks, or shenanigans or whatever you want to call them.

I've been, that I can recall, involved in elections since 1967. That was my father's second election. I was 10 years old, and I remember the day: an October election in 1967. It poured rain all day long. It was just unbelievable how ugly it was. But in good old Renfrew county, we still got well over 66% or 67% of the people out voting, unlike what you get in some of these elections here today.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Did Sean Conway help you out? Your cousin?

Mr. John Yakabuski: No, Sean wasn't helping. Sean wasn't helping, I've got to tell you that. He was maybe working for the other side, but he wasn't helping.

Mr. Jeff Leal: He tried.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Yeah, he tried. We were successful anyhow.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Thank God we didn't need him.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Well, he wasn't running against us.

But in all of those elections—and I've got to tell you, I can't say I witnessed it because I wasn't involved in the election. But in the 1962 election, the federal election—and you've got to listen to this, Mr. Speaker—in the townships of Sherwood, Jones and Burns that encompassed Barry's Bay, Murray Daly was the mayor, or the reeve, and was also warden of the county. He was running against Jim Baskin, who was the sitting Conservative member elected in 1958 in the Diefenbaker sweep.

My twin brother was named after Jim Baskin—pardon, he was elected in 1957. So the front of our store, the hardware store, during that election was the recipient of a gunshot, and the bullet, until the time that we sold the business in 2001, was lodged in the back wall. Mark Zurakowski, when he did some renovations after he bought the store, found that bullet. It was still in the back wall.

So they talk about stuff going on in elections? They don't know anything. They have no idea what went on in elections: the egging of cars and homes and houses and the ridiculous stuff that went on.

But let me get back to the point, because I'm good friends with the Dalys as well. You have to ask yourself why it was necessary, because in that election—you want to talk about numbers that blow you away? In that election, Murray Daly—because Barry's Bay and the area around it was traditionally Liberal—received 93% of the vote in Sherwood, Jones and Burns. He didn't get a bare majority; he didn't get 75%; he got 93% of the vote in Sherwood, Jones and Burns. So you'd have to ask yourself why someone was worried enough that they felt they had to fire a shot through the store at Yakabuski's. Anyway, people took their politics very seriously in those days.

We take the right to vote very seriously, but what this government has done here, bringing in this bill when there are so many significant priorities—and I share the concerns of my friend from Trinity-Spadina. Also, I see my friend from Welland, who has always got a very, very deep approach to the matters of this House. He raised an issue this afternoon which is so relevant and pertinent, because we're living in an environment today where I might call about a problem with my ExpressVu TV and the person I'm talking to might actually be in India.

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Mr. Rosario Marchese: He probably is.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Yes, he probably is.

I'm just wondering what the Attorney General, who is sitting there—he's probably studying revisions to the bill already. He's got his paperwork out. Maybe he's already thinking how he can make the bill better at committee. My goodness; I'm sorry. The bill is not going to committee.

You know the process we have in this House? It's a good process. I say that, my friend from Trinity-Spadina: It's a good process. What you do is, you have a second reading debate and you deal with all of the issues, and then parties decide whether they can support the bill at that point or not. You know what you do then? You know, Speaker. I'm not telling you anything you don't know. You take the bill to committee, and that's where those stakeholders and those third parties and those experts, maybe the Chief Electoral Officer—do you think maybe the Chief Electoral Officer, the person we entrust to run the electoral process in this province, might be able to make some good input into this bill? Where would be the best place for him to do that? I darn well believe a visit to the committee would be really helpful.

But you know what? He's not going to get to do that, no, not in Dalton—oh, my goodness gracious, it almost slipped out. Not in McGuinty's Ontario. It's not going to happen. Do you know why? You may not know this, Speaker, because they slip this stuff in and out under doors and behind the curtains and everything. The table knows: time allocation motion. The bill will now proceed through this House without the benefit of committee. So the government must believe it's a really good bill.

Now, I want to talk about that process, and I know you'll give me some latitude here, Mr. Speaker, because you're always good that way. Let's talk about another situation. We've talked about the process now. They think it's such a good bill that they don't need to go to committee.

Bill 69: That's another bill before this government. The government House leader was up earlier. She says, "I'm very supportive of the bill. I want it to move ahead." I want this on the record: This party has not done anything to slow the process of that. In fact, I've written the government House leader and I've said, "I'm asking you to bring this"—and a letter constitutes enough, I say to the government House leader. We've asked her to move it ahead. Do you know what? She came back to us and offered a deal. I'll call it the Bob Runciman deal. You see, back when Bob Runciman was here, they offered them a deal where, "We'll get your sweet wines or fruit wines bill before committee if you allow us to pass this bill, this bill, this bill and this bill," sort of thing. Bob Runciman, being a trusting guy—a great member, love the man, a mentor of mine—said, "You know what? That seems like a fair deal because we'll get it through committee and then we'll get it passed." It went to the Liberal committee. You know what they did? They snapped her. No way—stepped all over it, done, finished.

The government House leader, after four days, didn't even reply to me. I talked to her assistant, Carol Price. I said, "Okay, here's the deal. You get Bill 69 through committee and then we'll talk. Get it through committee, because I don't trust you people for a minute that if we send it to committee, you won't just squash it like you did to the Honourable Bob Runciman's bill."

So there's my offer right now. My offer right now, as the opposition House leader representing the member for Oxford: Let's move the bill third reading without debate so we can treat it the same as you people think you're going to save everybody's election. Let's deal with Bill 69—third reading, no debate, move it through. Will the government House leader do that, or are her words hollow like she's been spouting off to the media, saying she supports this bill? Actions speak—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Let's bring it back to 196, please.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I'm bringing it to the process, sir. Actions speak louder than words. When actions were required on Bill 169—196, but if you just turned that around a little bit, you could twist those two numbers over and you'd have 69. So 196 and 69 are so close, Speaker, they're like twins.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Talk about 196.

Mr. John Yakabuski: If the House leader wants to speak about her actions being important, she has the opportunity right now. I would move and seek unanimous consent of this House to move private member's Bill 69 through third reading without debate. Would I have unanimous consent on that right now?

Hon. Monique M. Smith: No.

Mr. John Yakabuski: The government House leader says no. She's the one calling the shots here. I saw her turn around and go, "No, no, no"—just so it's on the record that if there's anybody holding up Bill 69, just look to your right, because that's where she sits. The government House leader is the one who is holding this up.

Anyway, Bill 196: What can I say? Oh, can I get more time?

Thank you very much.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Questions and comments?

Mr. Peter Kormos: The member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke has delivered a scathing condemnation of this government and its regard for its own interests in contrast to due process. It's prepared to ram a bill through here that was introduced without any consultation. The Attorney General repeats over and over again, and rightly so, that it's a non-partisan bill, and these very sorts of non-partisan bills, like the amendments to the Members' Integrity Act, which was dealt with very effectively in a collaborative manner—it took some time, but we had the luxury of time.

We understand that the government wants this passed before the House rises. But had the government come to the opposition parties while the bill was in preparation and said this bill was being prepared, had it talked about how it wanted us to take a look at draft bills so we could take them to our caucus, had it given us the opportunity to provide a little bit of input, and, quite frankly, had it not been so brutal in its attacks on the Arnott private member's bill—the Arnott private member's bill was exactly what the Sorbara report recommended. Recommendation number 23 recommended exactly what is in private member Arnott's bill. The government can defeat it, but the government was less than forthright in how it attacked and critiqued it. The government refused to acknowledge that it was the Sorbara report, hand-picked by Premier McGuinty, that recommended that legislation, and then treated that private member and his important contribution to this broader interest of fair election processes with disdain.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Government House leader.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this bill again and to address some of the comments made by the member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke. As you gave him some leeway in his discussion, I am sure you will extend to me the same courtesy.

I find it very unfortunate that the member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke keeps referring to Bill 69

and making what is turning into quite a political show over this bill. I had the opportunity to speak to the parents of one of the deceased on the weekend. I also spoke to the uncle and the brother-in-law of one of the deceased. All of the families are clearly very vested in the Hawkins Gignac Act and in this particular piece of legislation that was brought by the member from Oxford. They're all very concerned and would like to see this move forward.

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As I explained to each and every one of them, as I had long conversations with them over the weekend, I have attempted, with our House leaders, to move it forward through the process. Unfortunately, other House leaders have not chosen to follow the process that's in place for private members' bills and have not raised it in our House leaders' meetings as we have done in the past.

I find it incredibly unfortunate that we are politicizing this particular issue. The families are very concerned. They're confused. They wanted to know what the status of the bill was. I explained to them that at this late date it would not move forward, as the bill does have to go to committee; it requires some consideration by the committee. There's some debate whether the carbon monoxide monitoring should be done by the fire marshal or whether it should be included in the building code, so there is some debate as to what the appropriate placement of this regulation is, and therefore it would need some discussion in committee.

I did offer to the Conservative House leader back in the fall to put it into committee in February. That was part of a package of private members' bills that we were going to move forward. That was not accepted by the Conservative House leader, and so here we stand today.

I just think it's really unfortunate that the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke continues to harp on this and to make it into a political issue. I feel for the parents, the Hawkins—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. The member for Parry Sound–Muskoka.

Mr. Norm Miller: It's my pleasure to make comments on the recent speech by the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. He did speak a fair amount about Bill 69, the Hawkins Gignac Act, which would require the installation of carbon monoxide detectors in homes. I know that the opposition is in favour of this, the NDP has indicated they're in favour of this and the government is talking like they're in favour of it. The government has all the control in the House and could easily pass this bill.

The government House leader's excuse for it is that it hasn't gone to committee. Well, the bill we're debating this evening, Bill 196, was just time-allocated; they introduced it this week and it's rushing through and isn't having any committee.

We've had months and months to consider Bill 69. It is of importance to people in my riding. The Gignac family has roots in Parry Sound and were affected by the tragedy. It's why the name of the bill is the Hawkins Gignac Act. So it's not so much about deals; it's about

doing what's right, and it seems like all parties are in favour of this bill.

In reference to the other bill in debate this evening, Bill 196, the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke gave some colourful descriptions of some of the shenanigans—I think that was the word he used—that went on in some of the earlier elections. I would just recommend to all people in the Legislature that you read the book *No Return*, written by a former MP for Parry Sound–Muskoka, Gordon Aiken. It's a very interesting book that's based on the real history that happened in Parry Sound–Muskoka, but it does deal with some of those shenanigans in some of the early elections that took place in Parry Sound–Muskoka. It's just been reprinted by Blue Butterfly Books, a new publishing company in Parry Sound–Muskoka owned by Patrick Boyer. It's a very good read, so I'd recommend it to anyone interested.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. The member for Trinity–Spadina.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: I know that the member from Oshawa and our friends from Parry Sound–Muskoka and possibly Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, were saying, "We all agree with the bill. Let's just move on." I want to say that all have commented, including the member from Welland, who said that we agree as well. But when you don't follow due process, it's hard to let a government go and say, "Move on." Just to express some disagreement with that, because if we don't express our disagreement with the government when they don't do it right, they think that they can get away with it.

The point is this, and we've been saying this for the last couple of days: If the Attorney General wanted the support of the other parties, he would have done it in a way that was more collaborative. These illegal practices involve all parties, and there are different people in all parties who do all sorts of nasty stuff.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Not New Democrats.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: You're quite right. In my career in Trinity–Spadina, the problems we've usually had have been with Liberals, with all due respect, Speaker. But I believe that there are problems that happen all over, and you can find a problem that might occur in all political parties; it's probably true. The point is that we should have had consultations with the House leaders in all three political parties. We should have had some agreement as to what measures should have been put into the bill so that you have all three parties in agreement in advance of the introduction of the bill. We should have had some agreement as to potential hearings: at least one afternoon, and if not an afternoon, at least an hour. We have stated over and over again that the Chief Electoral Officer should have been consulted. I'm assuming he hasn't been.

All of these things speak to process. This government has not followed through with that process. That's why we need to attack the government: We can't let it go through in this form.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke has two minutes to wrap up.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I'm just going to make one quick comment on Bill 69. The government has all the power, if they want to move it ahead. Anything that needs to be changed in that bill with respect to the fire marshal versus the building code could certainly be dealt with by amendment at a later date. But if you want to talk about carbon monoxide and you want to talk about deaths, that's a bill that could be done by this House before we leave here. It could be done.

On Bill 196—and I have in front of me recommendation 26 from the Sorbara report, Select Committee on Elections, first session, 39th Parliament. Recommendation 26: "Include provisions that apply to third party advertising similar to those in place in other Canadian jurisdictions." Recommended by their own committee. This government, the McGuinty government, said, "No way, no how. We've got \$5 million to \$10 million at our disposal, working with the Working Families Coalition, that we can use outside of the electoral spending laws. We're not shutting that down." "But it's about democracy." "Who cares about democracy?" they said. "We care about getting re-elected as Liberals." So they're worried about Bill 196 because someone might get a phone call, yet they care so little about democracy and put the electoral fortunes of the Liberal Party so much above democracy that they will not even follow the rules in other jurisdictions with regard to third party advertising. Shame on them.

Mr. Peter Kormos: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I wish to correct my record. Earlier, just a few moments ago, I made reference to recommendation number 23. Of course, it's recommendation 26.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. That is a point of order. The member can correct his or her own record.

Further debate? The member from Ottawa Centre.

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: Thank you, Speaker, for recognizing me to speak on Bill 196, An Act to amend the Election Act with respect to certain electoral practices.

Before I get into the substance of this bill and why this bill is important, let me say that I'm a bit baffled by the nature and the tone of the debate that's been taking place in this House on this bill. I think it was the member from Oshawa who was saying that those who may be listening to this debate may be confused as to why we're debating all this, and then he went on to start talking about what we refer to as inside baseball. Everything I'm hearing being talked about here today in this House is what only people who are somehow associated with Queen's Park care about. But the real people out there, I think, care about something much more fundamental, and that is that they have a very important democratic right to vote. That right to vote should be respected at all times, and that right to vote should not be interfered with by anyone in any circumstance whatsoever. That is the crux of this bill.

I'm a proud Canadian. I came to Canada—and I have talked about this story a fair number of times in this House—along with my family 22 years ago. The reason my family decided to come to this great country of ours is because they wanted to live in a free and democratic

country. My father, as I have spoken about many times in this House, was a political prisoner in Pakistan because back in 1984 he led a march, under a military dictatorship, asking for the right to vote.

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His crime was that he was provoking people to vote. That was written on the charge sheet. He was tried by a military general and put into prison for nine months. I was 10 years old at that time, and I very vividly remember visiting my dad, whose crime was that he was urging that people should have the right to vote.

So at the end of the day my parents, and I thank them for making the great decision they made, said they didn't want their children to grow up in a society where they didn't have the right to vote—the most fundamental of the rights available to us. They wanted to make sure that we lived in a country that was free. They wanted to make sure their children grew up in a country that respected human rights. They wanted to make sure my sister grew up in a country that respected women's rights and that their kids could do whatever they wanted to. It is because of that result, of that society, that I am fortunate enough, as somebody who was not born in Canada, to be an elected member of this Legislature.

That particular right, which is sacrosanct to Canadians, should not be taken away under any circumstances. I mean, the fact we're having a debate about this particular issue—I find it a bit ironic. It's appropriate; again, we are a democracy and we are free to express our views in debate, so I guess it fits in well, but the fact that we are quibbling about this bill or that bill, or the process by which this bill got here, takes away from the very real purpose or premise of this bill: that any interference in someone's right to vote, in the exercise of being able to cast a ballot, is illegal, period, full stop. I mean, what's the debate about that? What's so illogical about that?

I'm even more flabbergasted when I hear the argument, "Oh, this type of stuff has been for a long time." Well, it may be, but it does not make it right. We need to deal with it, and it's unfortunate that some people, in the last federal election, the one which just took place about a month ago, engaged in practices which in my opinion are illegal; which basically interfered with people's right to vote—in fact, were misleading people from where they should be voting, the kind of practice we refer to as voter suppression. Essentially, it is making sure that the supporters of one political party do not get an opportunity to vote. Of course, we live in a sophisticated society; we find sophisticated schemes to achieve that. It's absolutely wrong, period, full stop.

I think the issue here today is that when those types of activities took place in the last federal election, about a month or so ago, we looked at our legislation, the Election Act, and saw that those types of practices labelled as corrupt practices are not contemplated. I think it's only wise for this Legislature to define them as corrupt practices and to enact them into law so that nobody can attempt to do the same thing in any election moving forward.

It's perhaps a good time that we're doing it here, toward the end of the session, because we know there is an election coming up in the province of Ontario, an extremely important exercise in a democratic society. So let's do everything in our position so that this particular exercise, on October 6 of this year, is done in a proper, fair and transparent fashion.

Again, I come back to that I'm getting confused as to why we are going on and on and debating about this and finger-pointing and the tone is deteriorating. I think the member from Oshawa mentioned a friend who was visiting and wondering why we were debating this. The reason we're debating it is that we want to make sure that our system remains fair, equal, intact, that the fundamental core of our society, which is democracy, is not hijacked by anyone. I'm not engaging in any political name-calling or who does what and how. It's wrong, pure and simple. If this elected Legislature of the people—the people's servants, who we are—does not take action on that because some protocol at Queen's Park dictates that in the back rooms, in the back channels, you shall make deals this way and that way, that's abdicating our responsibility. That's really not doing what's important.

From time to time, I like to read the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. I think it's one of the most important documents we have at our disposal as Canadian citizens.

Interjection.

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: No, absolutely. I am a lawyer. I enjoy it and I think every Canadian citizen should enjoy it because it is a very important document. A lot of us have made Canada our home because of this very important constitutional document called the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, because that's what makes us equal.

Today, because it has been a while, I went on the Internet and Googled “the Charter of Rights and Freedoms,” and I've got the document in front of me. I printed out a section on democratic rights. There is a section on democratic rights, in sequence to the fundamental rights, which are freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of association etc. The heading is “Democratic rights,” section 3:

“Democratic rights of citizens

“3. Every citizen of Canada has the right to vote in an election of members of the House of Commons or of a legislative assembly”—that's us—“and to be qualified for membership therein.”

That's it, black and white. It clearly states that if you're a Canadian citizen, you have the right to vote for the House of Commons and for any Legislative Assembly, and you have a right to be a member as well, if you're elected. There are no qualifiers in this provision of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It does not say that if you get an opportunity; it does not say if you pass certain hurdles; it does not say that you may have to jump certain loopholes; it does not say that you have to defend yourself from illegal phone calls, people misrepresenting you—no. It says very categorically that as a Canadian citizen you have a right to vote. It is therefore our responsibility as elected members to ensure that that very

fundamental right to vote, entitled as a democratic right of citizens, is upheld, because if we don't, we may be in breach of our Constitution. I say “may”; I would argue that we will be in breach of the Constitution and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

I think it's extremely important that if a set of practices that were witnessed in the last election are not contemplated within our own Election Act, we do not turn a blind eye, that we do not look away, that we do not use the argument that “Oh, this kind of stuff happens”; or that we should not really comfort ourselves by saying, “This has been going on for a while, so really who cares?” or to think that the Legislature is coming to the end of the session and we'd rather be back in our ridings. I think all of those options would be abdicating our responsibility and would be unconstitutional. It is incumbent on us that we take steps to ensure that the next provincial election in October and any elections after that are free, fair, transparent and open to all Ontarians; that those who qualify to vote would have the right to vote; that those who engage in any illegal practice or practices like the ones we saw in the past election or any others that we experience that happens during elections—that there is a strict law against it, so there can be deterrents, so there can be punishment of those who engage in this type of practice.

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What is this bill trying to do? Well, I think there are two very egregious practices that we witnessed in the last election, and I commend the member from Guelph, who spoke very eloquently on those, highlighting the experiences of her community in Guelph, and shed a lot of light on those illegal practices. Things like getting phone calls on behalf of Elections Canada, or somebody pretending that they're calling on behalf of Elections Canada, and telling you, “Oh, by the way, your polling station has changed.” If that is not misleading, if that is not a suppression tactic, I don't know what else would be, because here is somebody obviously, clearly misleading you, trying to make sure that you do not get to the right place to exercise your right to vote, that you go somewhere else.

That practice, that type of illegal—intuitively, I think everybody who's listening to this debate at home is going, “Well, obviously that's wrong. That should be illegal.” You're right, it is wrong and it should be illegal, but it's not stated in our legislation because it's something we had not contemplated or faced before. So we are amending the act now and we want it to be passed by Thursday, because that is the last day of the Legislature before the next election, so that that type of practice would not take place, or at least there would be a remedy or enforcement of punishment for that type of practice if that takes place.

The second corrupt practice that we witnessed and heard about—and by the way, this type of stuff happened in Ottawa Centre as well, the riding I am so privileged to serve. It was of serious concern to campaigns when those practices were going on. Somebody tries to impede or interfere with somebody's right to vote, and again, it

could be through various things: by harassing them; by making too many phone calls, purportedly on behalf of another political party, where somebody says, "I don't want a part of this"; or again, impersonating Elections Canada or just flat out telling people, "Your vote is this day or the other day." Any of that type of behaviour is, through the amendments that are being made to the Election Act, being defined as a corrupt practice, because then there are penalties associated with it. Penalties associated with corrupt practices in the act are from \$5,000 to a maximum of \$25,000 and a maximum jail term of six months to two years less a day. Basically, what we're saying is, if you're caught doing anything like this, you can be fined anywhere between \$5,000 to \$25,000 and you may get a jail sentence of anywhere from six months to two years less a day, or both of these things, a combination.

That's a serious punishment, and rightly so. But again, it's important that we have that articulated in the legislation so that Elections Ontario or the Chief Electoral Officer has the tools to enforce. Because it's one thing to say that yes, these practices take place and it's wrong, but on the other hand, these practices take place and we've got to make sure that we prosecute those who commit those illegal practices; that we give the Chief Electoral Officer, who is responsible for conducting and organizing an election and making sure that the laws that are outlined in the Election Act are fully followed, the tools, the mechanisms, the investigative powers, the power to seek a certain punishment, as outlined in this legislation; that it exists. That is what this legislation is trying to do. This is not some game about, "This kind of stuff happens" or "It's just part of the game" or "This has been going on for umpteen years." No, no. This is about making sure that we have the fairest of the fairest elections and that we do not deny people's most fundamental democratic rights, which are outlined in our Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Failure to do so would be unconstitutional, because it does possibly take away people's rights—the most fundamental rights.

I come back to my personal story; it's a story which is very important to me, because it has defined me in many, many ways. It is what my family lived through. I am a proud Canadian citizen today because in the country I was born in, I did not have the rights outlined in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. When my parents struggled for those rights, they were punished for it because it took power away from those who didn't want to give power. For them it was more important that they live in a free society where one can do whatever, and at the most basic core have the right to vote so they can determine their own future. It is in their legacy and their memory, in many ways, that I am a public servant today. I wanted to be part of that process so that I can be with all my colleagues in this great Legislature, coming from different parts of the province with different backgrounds, representing different ideologies and ideas, so that we can all work together to ensure that we continue to a stronger Ontario, a province which is prosperous and

looks after each other, a province which is compassionate to each other.

That can only happen if we have a fair and open electoral practice, a process by which nobody is denied an opportunity to vote, and that is what we are trying to do through Bill 196. I urge all members to support this bill. Let's pass this bill before Thursday, the last day of the Legislature, so that we can go with peace of mind that when we are all campaigning and giving people the right to vote, their democratic right will be abided by within the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which gives us those rights.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Questions and comments?

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette: I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the member for Ottawa Centre's remarks.

There's a couple of things that I want to mention. If we want to move forward in making this better, we need to find the legal actions by which we can make it better, and how we're going to deal with issues such as the Internet, the social Net and all the other aspects that come forward and the communications that are method there.

I am not necessarily sure that this legislation will take those into consideration and how we can adjust for those new technologies coming online. Quite frankly, many members here realize, or may not realize, that the top 10 jobs in 2010 were never even conceived of in 2004.

To the people watching: I want to emphasize one thing. We've talked about how this is a great thing to do. What do you do when the call comes? What do you do with that? There are a couple of simple things you can do: First of all, get a name if you can. Record the phone number or the communication by which they get in touch with you and then report it to the police immediately. You need to document as much time and all those other things.

You're going to move forward with this legislation, but how do we enact it and what do people do out there when they see this sort of thing, and how to react and deal with it? At least if we can tell them that when a call comes in or a communication comes in that you're suspicious of, record as much information, including the time, the date, the location, any phone numbers that appear on a call display or any names that you're able to get for these individuals—that you can address that directly.

The member from Ottawa Centre was speaking about the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. One of the concerns, I believe—and I was trying to verify it in the time that I spoke last—was that during the last occurrence in the federal election in Oshawa, when these were reported to the police, they thought it was kind of passive; they thought it was a bit of a joke. They said, "What do you want us to do? What's the big deal?" At least, quite frankly, if we're able to heighten the realization that there are some aspects there that need to be addressed, then when they do come forward they can be addressed by those who have the ability to do so during that time.

2040

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member for Welland.

Mr. Peter Kormos: I appreciate the youthful sincerity of the member for Ottawa Centre. He knows that I have regard for him. But I talked about this earlier today: The cops have no interest in investigating offences like the ones that are being created in this legislation, and Elections Ontario has no capacity; they don't have an investigative body. We've got serious jurisdictional problems, because as speakers have noted—I did earlier, and several have already today—you've got call centres operating out of anywhere from Manitoba through to Wyoming, or Wisconsin for that matter, or the Caribbean or Pakistan or India. I don't know where.

This is fine legislation; it's not bad legislation. That's why we're supporting it. But it certainly isn't a comprehensive package that will deal with the dirty tricksters, and in that regard I submit that what you really need—I said this earlier today—is a couple of amendments to the Criminal Code. Election fraud, just in general—and a couple of amendments to the Criminal Code would be all you would need to deal with almost every one of the potential dirty tricks that can be employed or utilized during an election time. Then you've got the Criminal Code and the power of criminal investigation and criminal conviction to assist you. You've got the whole concept of pan-Canadian jurisdiction, and Criminal Code amendments would be applicable to federal, provincial and municipal elections. That, I believe, is the course that we should take.

So if we're going to pass this—I don't know what the next government's going to be, but it seems to me that on the front burner of the next government should be re-addressing this issue, building a more comprehensive provincial legislative framework, but also, more importantly, getting Rob Nicholson—who loves making amendments to the Criminal Code; Lord knows he loves that—to make Criminal Code amendments that will truly have impact.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further comments or questions?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: I'm happy to have an opportunity to address some of the remarks that have been made today. There has been a suggestion that it might be more appropriate that another tool, the Criminal Code, would be used to address some of the abuses that have been experienced across Ontario. That is not for our government to decide. I certainly appreciate that we can advocate.

I will say that in my own riding I heard from constituents who, if they were not impacted directly by these sorts of activities, had heard about them. I think particularly for veterans, the men and women who left this country and fought for us to have the right to vote, this is something that is particularly important to them; indeed, it is sacred to them. There is nothing more galling and/or upsetting for veterans and family members of veterans particularly, whose members gave, in many cases, the ultimate sacrifice so that we today could enjoy the right to our franchise, the right to vote. To know that people would look for ways to abuse that right, to try to abuse

the process we are so blessed to have here in our country, is something that is very serious to them. They do believe that we, as a government, have a responsibility to act to the degree that we can to make sure that it doesn't happen again, that it is not repeated; that that very precious franchise we all have in any and every election in the province of Ontario is not perverted; that there is not an abuse out there in our—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. The member for Pembroke and Nipissing—

Mr. John Yakabuski: It works for me, Speaker.

I had the opportunity to listen to the member from Ottawa Centre and also to the questions and comments. I must say that the Minister of Education, the member for Prince Edward-Hastings—you know, she makes a lovely appeal and she is very, very sweet about the way she's saying this is important and everything. But let me point out a couple of things.

They were talking earlier about these things going on in elections in 2008, federal elections in 2008. As you've heard before, I say to the Minister of Education, what took you so long? Why didn't you bring in this bill three years ago, after the 2008 election? Why, in the eleventh hour, as this Parliament is about to expire, would we then bring in this bill as some sort of a last death rattle? Goodness gracious, what is this?

I'll tell you, they had a wonderful opportunity here in the Sorbara report, if they wanted to support democracy. I have to repeat it, because it bears repeating. My colleague from Wellington-Halton Hills, Mr. Arnott, brought in a private member's bill that they just shut down; they didn't want to hear about it. But what does it say? Recommendation 26 says—and this was brought right by Greg Sorbara—"Include provisions that apply to third party advertising similar to those in place in other Canadian jurisdictions." I was careful with that because I don't have my glasses, Madam Speaker. They could have done that. They could have stood up for democracy. They said no. Why?

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member for Ottawa Centre has two minutes to respond.

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: I thought for a second I lost my hearing there. But let me just thank the member from Oshawa, the member from Wellington, the Minister of Education and the member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke for their comments.

The member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke talked about the timing of this bill. The federal election took place on May 2.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Was that the first federal election?

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: I think respect requires that as I was listening to you, you listen to me, sir. Thank you.

The federal election took place on May 2, when a lot of these concerns surfaced and we started reading about it and then started sharing experiences as to what we saw in our communities. The bill was tabled on May 17. If that is not expeditious, then I don't know what expeditious may be. Just because these are the dying days of this

Legislature does not mean that we stop working until the last day of this Legislature. This Legislature is duly elected until October 5 or 6, I believe, and the Legislature is duly sitting until this particular Thursday, on June 2. Our work continues on behalf of the people of Ontario. It is our responsibility, in fact, it is our duty on their behalf to ensure we uphold the democratic right as enshrined in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. They have a right to vote and we need to make sure that there is no interference in their right to vote, because otherwise I am concerned that we will not be upholding their most fundamental and democratic right. That is why I support this bill and why I urge all members to support this bill, so it could be enacted on Thursday.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Norm Miller: It's my pleasure to have the opportunity this evening to speak to Bill 196, which is An Act to amend the Election Act with respect to certain electoral practices. It was introduced pretty recently, May 17 to be exact. Of course, we're here in the last week of the legislative session just before a provincial election, which is going to happen on October 6.

As the opposition, I have to tell you, Madam Speaker, we do get a little concerned when the government, as its last gasp, if I may put it that way—the last bill it introduces is a bill about changing the rules to do with elections. That, right off the top, is a bit of a concern; certainly also the fact that they are rushing this through. We just started second reading debate this evening and it looks like the government's plan on this is to debate the required six and a half hours so that they can then bring in the time allocation motion, which they have already presented to the table. I haven't seen the time allocation motion. Perhaps the House leader can give me the time allocation motion.

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Mr. John Yakabuski: Oh, I've seen the motion. It's disgraceful.

Mr. Norm Miller: If he gave me a copy of it, I could—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I would ask, please, that the member direct his remarks through the Speaker.

Mr. Norm Miller: Okay, Madam Speaker. I thought I was directing my comments through you. There were some other comments coming from behind me, mind you.

But the time allocation motion—

Mr. John Yakabuski: There it is, sir, and we've treated it accordingly.

Mr. Norm Miller: Thank you very much. So we now have a time allocation motion which has been presented, a motion for time allocation of Bill 196: "Ms. Smith moves that, pursuant to standing order 47 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 196, An Act to amend the Election Act with respect to certain electoral practices, when Bill 196 is next called as a government order, the Speaker

shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill, without further debate or amendment, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading, which order may then be immediately called; and

"That, when the order for third reading is called, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

"That no deferral of the second or third reading votes pursuant to standing order 28(h) shall be permitted; and

"That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes."

Essentially, what this time allocation order means is that the debate ends tonight. There will be no opportunity—as has been suggested by many of the speakers this evening, a logical thing to do when you're introducing a bill to do with changing the rules for elections is that perhaps you might want the Chief Electoral Officer to come before the committee and make recommendations. There may also be other parties who would be interested in looking at the bill to make recommendations. Then, of course, what would normally happen is, from those recommendations, if you took the time to listen to the people who came before the committee, we would then propose amendments. They could come from all three parties. Then, those amendments—hopefully some of them might pass, although what tends to happen around this House these days is only government amendments pass, no matter whether opposition ones are valid or not. But the idea would be to improve the bill. Instead, basically debate ends tonight.

I believe this was the time allocation motion given to the member from Welland, the third party House leader. Based on how crumpled up it is, I think I know his feeling about the actual time allocation motion.

That's the situation we have. We have this Bill 196. It's basically a one-page bill, I believe originating from things that may have happened in the federal election campaign. I assume they did, because they were reported in the news: phone calls that were made to people as they were getting ready to vote on election day, supposedly coming from Elections Canada, telling them that for some reason their polling station had changed and directing them to some other place. I'm not quite sure how that would be of benefit to any party necessarily, but that's, I believe, what happened. It's not that we object to this bill, but I don't really believe it's going to make any difference to that particular situation.

As I have mentioned in a few of the times I've had an opportunity to comment on other people's speeches this evening, I have noted that there are far more egregious things happening in elections at the current time in Ontario, and I certainly will go into that.

But what this bill does is, "The bill amends the Election Act to add new sections 96.2 and 96.3. Section 96.2 prohibits interference with voting. Section 96.3 prohibits impersonation of electoral officials, candidates and

persons authorized to act on behalf of candidates, parties and constituency associations.

"Several offences under the act, including the ones described in new sections 96.2 and 96.3, constitute 'corrupt practices' if committed knowingly. The existing penalty for a person who is found guilty of a corrupt practice is a fine of not more than \$5,000, imprisonment for a term of not more than six months, or both. The maximum fine for a corrupt practice is increased to \$25,000 and the maximum term of imprisonment to two years less a day."

Brian MacLeod summed this legislation up best by calling it a "feeble Liberal law," which won't stop election dirty tricks. "In the federal election, the telephone was the main weapon of choice, through call centres, whose location was undetermined." As I mentioned, on election day, voters in some ridings received automated phone calls telling them their polling station had moved, when it hadn't.

So that's what this is all about. I'd say it's more about politics. I'm not quite sure what the government has to gain from this, but they did send what I would call an unusual email out—I'm sure to a wide audience. It was to the OLP Wire. This is the email sent out by the government when they introduced this bill, and that's why I say it's more about politics. This is the email:

"We saw American-style dirty tricks in the federal election by the federal Conservatives." How they know that, I don't know. "Today we're introducing tough new legislation that will mean stiff fines and jail time if anyone breaks the rules during Ontario's election. Here's what you need to know:

"It will be illegal for anyone to give voters false information or impersonate a candidate, campaign worker or an Elections Ontario official. Those caught breaking the law will be fined up to \$25,000 and get nearly two years in jail. We know that the same people who ran the federal Conservative campaign are running rookie leader Tim Hudak's campaign. Right now it's looking like the Hudak PCs will try to block the passage of this legislation. Either way, we'll know by their actions where they stand and what their own plans are for the upcoming Ontario election."

So a very partisan email that was sent out. How they presume to know how we would vote—the main reason we would vote against this, and we don't object to this at all, is for what it's missing, and it's missing a lot.

As you know, in the federal campaign, the documented cases of breaking the rules were documented by the Liberal candidate, and I note the *Globe and Mail* article on Joe Volpe, entitled "Joe Volpe Turfs Campaign Worker Caught Trashing Green Pamphlets."

"A Liberal Party volunteer has been dismissed after removing Green Party campaign flyers from mailboxes and replacing them with Liberal materials while door-knocking with Toronto incumbent Joe Volpe.

"The actions of an unidentified man canvassing with Mr. Volpe, who has long represented Eglinton-Lawrence, were captured in a series of photographs by a Green Party supporter on Friday."

So it seems pretty clear that this happened and was documented. It goes on:

"The canvasser's no longer with us. End of story," is what the Liberal Party said.

"Despite the dismissal, Green candidate Paul Baker is preparing a complaint to Elections Canada, noting that Mr. Volpe was nearby when the flyers were trashed.

"What I guess disappoints us is that Joe was there.... He may not have been robbing the bank, but it seems he was driving the getaway car," he said. "In our minds, there's no doubt that he was aware."

So that's a case that happened in the recent federal election and, as far as I know, it's against the law at this time, so we don't need any new law. But it was the Liberal Party that was caught in that situation.

The biggest hole in this Bill 196, what it's missing most, is anything to do with third party advertising, and that's where we do have an unequal playing field in Ontario at this time. I would note the government's own report from the Select Committee on Elections, done by Mr. Sorbara, who was the Chair of that committee, which did result in a number of election law changes in the province of Ontario. It made recommendations about third party advertising. In that, it noted that other provinces do have third party advertising rules—that is, parties other than political parties that spend money with political objectives. In the report, they note:

"Should Ontario adopt third party spending limits (following the lead of Canada, British Columbia and Quebec)?

"Should Ontario adopt third party contribution limits?

"Should Ontario attempt to limit third party advertising spending to the amounts a third party raises prior to and during an election campaign?

"Should Ontario adopt stricter registration and anti-collusion provisions?"

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And then the committee did its work, and they made a recommendation. The recommendation was number 26:

"The committee considered the proposal that Ontario's electoral legislation

"26. Include provisions that apply to third party advertising similar to those in place in other Canadian jurisdictions."

"The committee took notice of the provisions that apply to third party advertising in other Canadian jurisdictions and commends them to the government for consideration in any revision of Ontario's election finance legislation."

That was the government's own select committee, headed by Mr. Sorbara, recommending that there should be provisions to do with third party advertising.

The government conveniently ignored that part of their own select committee's report. You may ask, why did they ignore that? I would say it's because the Liberal Party benefits from third party advertising, in that they have a very close relationship with the Working Families Coalition, a group that is mainly union-based and whose objective it is to make sure that Progressive Conservative

members are not elected and that the Progressive Conservative Party does not form a government in the province of Ontario.

In fact, you may remember that back in 2003, they ran ads focused on Ernie Eves that were in bus stops around Toronto: "Not this time, Ernie, not this time," and they had TV ads. They spent a lot of money. They spent \$5 million to \$10 million. They spent as much as the major political parties do on advertising. But there are no rules, no accountability, to do with what they spend.

If you look back to the 2007 election, who funded the Working Families Coalition? Well, you have the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association which funded \$100,000. You have the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation which contributed \$100,000. You have the Canadian Auto Workers who contributed \$200,000, and the Ontario Pipe Trades Council, \$400,000. The International Union of Operating Engineers in Oakville contributed \$150,000. The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers contributed \$383,000. The Canadian Ironworkers political action committee contributed \$60,000, and on it goes, so we're talking big dollars.

The problem with this is that the government, after benefiting from these contributions through attack ads that help elect Liberal candidates, rewards the Working Families Coalition after the election with legislation and also with pay increases that are not necessarily for the benefit of the general society. For example, the construction unions were very supportive of this ad campaign, and then the government passed legislation to do away with secret ballots in the forming of construction unions. I don't know how anybody can argue against the secret ballot as being the most effective and fairest way to determine if a group of employees wants a union or doesn't want a union. But that's what the government did. They did away with the secret ballot and went back to the old system that used to be in place in the early days, this card-based system for signing up for unions, which is open to a lot of manipulation. We went away from a secret ballot to this old system.

The biggest thing is just very hefty contract increases. We've seen how, in the past number of years, despite a worldwide recession, despite the government talking about a wage freeze, actually what has happened is that there has hardly been a group around that negotiates with the government that hasn't seen significant increases, whether it's eHealth, where we now find out that there was a 10% increase, or OPSEU, which had increases in every year and then a secret increase of 1% beyond the next election. Every day, we learn of another group that has another secret deal. I say it's connected to this. That is why this is a big hole in this legislation. It's not dealing with this third party advertising and it's creating an un-level playing field. The Progressive Conservative Party does not have a Working Families Coalition that will be spending \$5 million or \$10 million running nasty attack ads against the Liberal Party.

I note that the member from Wellington-Halton Hills did have a private member's bill, Bill 195, which was

specifically aimed at dealing with this. In fact, the bill was called An Act to amend the Election Finances Act to ban collusion in electoral advertising. He did get an opportunity to debate, and I believe it was pretty much the day after he introduced it that the government introduced this bill. Maybe this is supposed to be a diversion of some kind.

There is obviously not a healthy situation in the province of Ontario, where there isn't a level playing field. Pretty much all of the other provinces have rules. For example, you still allow third party advertising, but you set a limit of \$100,000, \$200,000 or \$300,000, so you don't have a group, an association, spending millions and millions of dollars for the government that it is then beholden to. That's not good for the people of Ontario.

With that, Madam Speaker, I will conclude my remarks this evening. Thank you very much.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): It's time for questions and comments. The member for Welland.

Mr. Peter Kormos: I suspect that at the conclusion of questions and comments, this debate will have been brought to an abrupt end by the government, electing to use its authority under some very unfair standing orders to shut down debate. That will then pave or lead the way to the time allocation motion. We'll have two hours of debate on a time allocation motion, and that time allocation motion, folks should know, forbids, prohibits, denies the public—or anybody else, for that matter—an opportunity to participate in public hearings around this matter. That time allocation motion, even more interestingly, indicates that the next time the bill is called, once that time allocation motion is passed, it shall be voted on, and that it shall then be called for third reading.

The time allocation motion circumvents the standing orders. The standing orders are a nuisance to this government. They're something that has to be overcome at every step of the way instead of being seen as a guide to responsible process for effective legislation creation.

This isn't a novel experience for us here in this Legislature, because the Liberals, over the course of eight years, have used time allocation with a brutality and a ruthlessness that are unprecedented. The Liberals here at Queen's Park have restricted committee participation by the public, and I go back, whether it was Michael Bryant and the pit bull legislation—they really shut that down in short order when things stopped going his way—or any other number of pieces of legislation here that the Liberals started to quiver about.

But judgment day comes October 6, and it will not be pleasant for my colleagues on the other side.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further comments?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I don't know what's happened to the delicate, soft souls and unhardened hands opposite. When we brought forward legislation that reduced the cost of generic drugs, we faced a rather brutal third party campaign that was very aggressive, directed specifically and very personally against the health minister and against our party. I did not hear Liberals coming here and

saying, "Oh, no. It's terrible. Democracy is so tough. Other people will exercise their rights."

Grow up. Would you guys just grow up? What did you do in my constituency? You closed the Wellesley hospital, you closed the Central hospital, you threatened to close the Grace hospital; you took transit money away from kids in Regent Park so the dropout rate went from 60% to 68%. The parents were upset. The hospital workers were upset. So they formed a coalition and they said, "Vote for Peter and his friends," or vote for some of the folks over here, because we were upset.

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The leader of your federal party, Stephen Harper, took the federal Liberal government all the way to the Supreme Court and raised millions of dollars to try and stop any restrictions on third party advertising—all the way to the Supreme Court. He fought that for seven years.

I'm a gay man. I have had Focus on the Family run some of the nastiest campaigns at me, not for any political position I've taken, but just simply for who I am.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Oh, stop it.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Grow up. Stop—

Mr. John Yakabuski: It has nothing to do with this debate.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: It does, because you know, there are all these religious evangelical groups who run campaigns against some of us who are members of minorities. We've learned to be tougher. Stop being such a bunch of sissies and just grow up.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Comments and questions?

Mr. Ted Arnott: I would like to ask the Minister of Research and Innovation to withdraw the unparliamentary insult to the opposition that he just articulated.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Madam Speaker, I'm not quite clear on what the member was offended by.

Mr. Ted Arnott: You called us sissies.

Interjections.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Madam Speaker, I would never want them to have to join a club they wouldn't want to be a member of, so I'll withdraw the comment.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Just withdraw the comment.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): No, just a minute.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: You're a sissy for complaining about being called a sissy.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Order. I'm going to ask the member to withdraw. Just withdraw.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Speaker, I withdraw the comment.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further comments and questions? The member for Wellington—Halton Hills.

Mr. Ted Arnott: I want to compliment the member for Parry Sound—Muskoka for his fine speech this evening in response to the government's Bill 196.

Of course, we know that the bill is now time-allocated, or at least a time allocation motion has been tabled, and we see that the time allocation motion is particularly repugnant and restrictive on the opposition. In fact, there will be no committee hearings whatsoever on this piece of legislation, even though the government did not consult the opposition before bringing the bill forward, and what's even worse and most remarkable is that there's absolutely no debate on third reading. I don't recall a precedent where that was the case.

It's absolutely incredible, and especially given the fact that our party has brought forward a bill, Bill 195, in the Legislature. We continue to advocate for it, because we do believe that, in fact, it would create a level playing field with respect to advertising for political parties during election campaigns.

We know that the Working Families issue colours this entire debate. The fact is, the Working Families organization is planning to expend probably millions of dollars yet again, most likely in direct co-operation, if not collusion, with the Liberal Party. Most likely there will be direct communication between the Liberal staffers and the Working Families Coalition to help devise and develop the attack ads to allow the Working Families Coalition to do the dirty work that the Liberal Party doesn't want to do with its advertising. It wants to keep its advertising nice and positive and happy.

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: On a point of order, Madam Speaker: I would ask the honourable member to withdraw the unparliamentary language he is using.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The—

Mr. Jeff Leal: They used the word "collusion."

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Yes, but the term has been used all evening with regard to this bill. The member has—

Mr. Ted Arnott: I'll just draw again to the minister's attention that the name of my bill was An Act to amend the Election Finances Act to ban collusion in electoral advertising. I would suggest—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you.

Further comments and questions?

Mr. John Yakabuski: I want to make probably my final comment on this bill. Shortly, no one will be allowed to comment on this bill ever again in this House because debate has been stifled. Discussion has been shut down. Democracy cries this evening, because without the ability to take this bill to committee, we lose the benefit of those people out there, such as the Chief Electoral Officer, who could probably have strengthened and made this bill better.

I say to the member for Ottawa Centre, who talked about, "Oh, we needed to do something drastic after May 2," yet they talked about these things going on in previous elections: Where was the government then? All of a sudden this was the most important thing on their agenda, to bring up this piece of legislation? It may sound like I'm repeating myself, but they had the opportunity just a short week or so ago to support my colleague

and friend from Wellington–Halton Hills, Ted Arnott, on a very thoughtful bill that would stand for democracy by banning collusion and third party advertising, which has been of such benefit to the Liberal Party.

So you see, whether it's good or bad does not seem to be the measurement of whether it lives or dies in the Liberal Party; it's whether or not it's good for them. And if it's good for them, it's okay.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member has two minutes to respond.

Mr. Norm Miller: Thank you to the member from Welland, the Minister of Research and Innovation, the member from Wellington–Halton Hills and the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke for their comments.

I would simply say that the Minister of Research and Innovation was essentially off topic. He wasn't talking about spending in an election period, which is what I was talking about.

As was noted by the member from Welland, essentially the debate on the bill will be shortly over. It is unusual, and that was noted by the member from Wellington–Halton Hills too, that there will be no third reading on this debate. Usually we complain when the government limits debate to just an hour on third reading, but in this case, this crumpled time allocation motion, which I got from the member from Welland, the House leader of the third party—it reflects his feelings about the time allocation motion. Essentially, debate will be over.

It is a shame they aren't going to be following their own advice from their select committee and doing something about third party advertising, when we see the close connection of the Liberal Party to the Working Families Coalition: the fact that Don Guy, who is the president of Pollara, does the polling for the Working Families Coalition. He's also the director of Mr. McGuinty's campaign. Marcel Wieder, who does advertising for the Ontario Liberal Party and has contracts with the Ontario Liberal Party, is also the person responsible for doing ads for the Working Families Coalition. Of course, there's Pat Dillon, the head of the Working Families Coalition, who has multiple appointments by this government.

So we have a problem, and this bill is not dealing with that very significant problem. It would be fair for all parties, no matter how big or small, to have the same rules and limits on third party advertising in the province of Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Pursuant to standing order 47(c), I am now required to interrupt the proceedings to announce that there has been more than six and a half hours of debate on the motion for second reading of this bill. This debate will therefore be deemed adjourned unless the government House leader indicates otherwise.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I think she wants to keep it going.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: Again, the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke is mistaken. We have no further debate.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

FIRE PROTECTION AND PREVENTION AMENDMENT ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA PRÉVENTION ET LA PROTECTION CONTRE L'INCENDIE

Mr. Sousa moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 181, An Act to amend the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997 / Projet de loi 181, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur la prévention et la protection contre l'incendie.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Debate?

Hon. Charles Sousa: It's a privilege to once again rise and speak to the Fire Protection and Prevention Amendment Act, 2011. I am pleased that we are joined today by Fred LeBlanc, Mark Train and Mike Scarangella from the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association.

I know all Ontarians join Minister Bradley and I in expressing our deepest gratitude to the firefighters, both those who are joining us here today, as they have throughout this debate, and those throughout this province. It is the safety of firefighters and the people of Ontario that lie at the heart of the bill. You will know that prior to the introduction of Bill 181, a motion was passed in this House on March 10, 2011. That motion, brought forward by our colleague the member for Algoma–Manitoulin, recognized the important role firefighters in Ontario play every day in keeping our community safe. The motion, which passed unanimously, cited health and safety evidence and called upon the Ontario government to introduce legislation to allow for the mandatory retirement of salaried front-line firefighters. It is important to note that the motion reflected current practice and is consistent with the recent Human Rights Tribunal decision. Following this motion, the Ministries of Labour and Community Safety and Correctional Services consulted with fire safety partners on how best to move forward. The bill before us is the result of these consultations.

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This bill will bring greater clarity and uniformity to the issue of mandatory retirement in the fire sector for the sake of firefighters, our fire services and the public they serve. As Ontario's Minister of Labour, my mission is to advance safe workplace practices that are essential to the well-being of Ontario's workers. Our government is committed to working with its fire safety partners to keep our communities and our firefighters safe. This bill addresses two labour-related issues of concern to the fire community. The first is mandatory retirement and the second is duty of fair representation. I will speak briefly to both of these, but will begin by addressing the proposed amendments around mandatory retirement for salaried firefighters regularly assigned to active fire suppression duties.

Bill 181 would permit a mandatory retirement age of no less than 60 for firefighters regularly assigned to fire suppression activities. Such a mandatory provision would

have to be set out in a collective agreement. However, if a collective agreement does not contain such a provision or if the provision that is currently in place provides for a mandatory retirement age younger than 60, the agreement would be deemed to contain a provision of mandatory retirement at 60 years of age. Further, in order to ensure a smooth transition for all parties, this deeming provision would not come into effect until two years after royal assent. This two-year period would provide an opportunity to negotiate provisions in collective agreements that provide for retirement at an age of 60 or greater if the parties choose to do so. It also allows time for planning both by the municipal employers and by individual firefighters prior to a new provision in their collective agreement coming into effect.

It is important to stress that our proposed changes on mandatory retirement generally reflect current practices in most municipalities, and it is important to note that the mandatory retirement age of 60 for firefighters on the front lines of firefighting activities has generally been found by human rights tribunals to be a legitimate bona fide occupational requirement. For example, the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario recently reviewed extensive medical evidence and found that age is a very significant contributor to risk of cardiac events among firefighters. There is a significantly increased risk of cardiac disease around the age of 60, and the safety consequences of such an event for a firefighter, the public and his or her colleagues may be grave. We are certainly all aware that firefighters work under unique conditions. Their work is extremely physical and unpredictable. They contend with intense heat, thick smoke and dangerous chemicals and they frequently encounter these hazards in confined areas. They perform their duties under the most demanding and stressful of conditions.

There are approximately 80 collective agreements in Ontario that cover firefighters under part IX of the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997, and of these 80 agreements, we know that about two thirds contain a mandatory retirement age. The vast majority of those already stipulate that age to be 60, so the amendment we are discussing today serves to reinforce what currently exists in the majority of firefighter collective agreements. But our amendment also recognizes that salaried firefighters involved in active firefighting may continue to make a valuable contribution in other ways. To that end, those engaged in battling fires would not be compelled to retire if their employer could accommodate them by assigning them to other duties without causing the employer undue hardship. For example, front-line firefighters who have reached the retirement age, as set out in their collective agreements, might have the opportunity to be assigned to duties in the fire service like fire prevention, if such a position is available.

I would like to now just take a moment to speak to the important work done across our province by voluntary firefighters. First, I want to reiterate that this legislation does not impact volunteer firefighters. We are very aware of the crucial role that volunteers play, especially in

smaller municipalities. Our volunteer firefighters are our neighbours, who take time away from their families to keep us safe, and as volunteers we rely on their dedication and selflessness.

Our discussions with the fire safety community included meeting with representatives of volunteer firefighters. The information we received was of great value in developing the scope of this proposed legislation. Importantly, we are told that the age restrictions of volunteers would have a significant negative impact on the quality of service in some volunteer service communities.

We know that there has been some discussion since the introduction of this bill about its potential impact on pensions as well. To be clear, we do not anticipate an impact on pensions on any of the systems, as the bill generally reflects current practice and allows parties to agree on setting an age of 60 or higher in a collective agreement. By reflecting current practice and allowing for a negotiated age over 60 to be set, we are providing local flexibility in those few instances where firefighter pension planning is currently based on a retirement age of 65 rather than 60.

The second component of this bill concerns the duty of fair representation. Ontario's Labour Relations Act, 1995, imposes a duty of fair representation on most unions across this province. The duty of fair representation requires unions to represent employees fairly by not acting in a manner that is arbitrary, discriminatory or in bad faith. Such a provision, however, is not contained in the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997. Currently, firefighters in Ontario do not have access to the Ontario Labour Relations Board for duty of fair representation issues. Because of this, they must instead turn to the courts or, in some cases, to the Human Rights Tribunal.

We believe, as do our fire sector partners, that the Ontario Labour Relations Board is the appropriate venue for these matters. In fact, in discussing this issue with the parties involved, it became clear that there is no good reason why unionized firefighters should not have access to the labour board for unfair representation complaints in the same way as most other unionized employees do. Quite simply, giving firefighters access to the Ontario Labour Relations Board in matters concerning the duty of fair representation is the right thing to do. In order to ensure a smooth transition, we are proposing that this provision would not come into effect until December 1, 2011.

To conclude, Ontario's firefighters, who keep our families and homes safe, do so with great bravery and dedication and deserve our utmost respect. We have listened to the firefighters of this province and to key stakeholders in the fire sector. I would like to take this opportunity to again thank our fire safety partners for taking the time to sit down with us and discuss this issue. I am pleased that our government has introduced this legislation, and I would like as well to thank Minister Bradley and his ministry for their hard work and his input on this bill.

But I would especially like to thank our firefighters. Our firefighters' commitment to the public, to the fire service and to the communities they serve continues to serve as an example to us all.

Thank you, members of the firefighting community of Ontario.

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The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Comments and questions? Further debate?

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: It's a pleasure to be here to make a few comments on the third reading debate of Bill 181.

The Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association has been asking for this for the last four or five years. They've had a fairly strong lobby and what we consider to be a good argument for this legislation. I know our leader, Tim Hudak, is very supportive of this and has come forward a number of times at the lobby days asking for this.

I think it sort of sells itself in that they take an age of 60—and we all know there are people who are maybe 65, 70 or 75 who are in excellent physical condition. But if you look at the data they've provided through studies in the United States and in Canada, there is a sort of cut-off point there where, at the age of 60, for the average person, you're probably taking more risk than normal, and you'd also be putting your fellow colleagues in the fire services in jeopardy. I think that was the number one reason that we support this legislation: It's not so much the pension plans or the particular age; it's about a public safety issue around your fellow colleagues in the fire service.

For that reason, I think it's important that we support the professional firefighters. This bill, as many people know, is only for the professional firefighters and full-time firefighters. We all know that there's a question around—many of us have heard the argument from AMO and some of our volunteer fire services as well about what the impact will be etc. But I consider this bill to be a good first step, and I'm glad to see that we have support, not only in first reading and second reading, at committee, but here tonight as well. I hope the bill will pass and be proclaimed as quickly as possible.

I was happy to hear the minister talk about volunteer fire services as well, because many of us in the Legislature here come from communities with little or no professional firefighters; by far, the vast majority of the fire services are done by our volunteer members in our community. I think I've said a number of times that I've got two full-time fire services in my community, and I also work quite closely with the Barrie fire service. With the exceptions of those, everyone else basically has a full-time chief, maybe a fire prevention officer, and then beyond that it's all volunteers. We owe a debt of gratitude to them, because they do take time out of their lives. Again, I want to pay tribute to the two gentlemen who lost their lives in the Listowel fire earlier this year. That was a very sad day in Ontario, and I know that the professional firefighters—Fred, you took a leadership

role in helping with the funeral arrangements and that sort of thing, and I think that was nice to see as well.

On a kind of a funny note, it's always amazing to watch the fire services because they're always asked to go in all the different parades and functions we have across our communities. Just on the weekend, I couldn't be at what we call the Coldwater Duck Race, where they dump 5,000 rubber duckies in the Coldwater River, and you buy a ticket on one of these ducks, and the winning duck that gets down to a certain line—it flows through the water—that's the person who gets first prize. Of course, in the middle of it all, there was a fire. They had to spread the parade, and the fire trucks all had to get out and go out to the fire; I think there were three or four fire trucks there. Those are our volunteer firefighters in our community, so I'm glad, Minister, you mentioned that.

I do want to go back for one second about a question I asked earlier in the House, and that's about our firefighters who work for the Ministry of Natural Resources. We met with some, and they're not covered by the presumptive legislation. I think they should be, and I hope that, with the help of our professional firefighters, the Ministry of Labour and the WSIB, we can in fact move in that direction, that our forestry firefighters are covered under presumptive legislation as well. I think it was only a week or so or two weeks ago, we sent a number, I think it was 85 or 90 of our provincial forest firefighters out to Alberta to fight that massive fire at the community of Slave Lake.

I don't think I have to go on here a long time tonight. We could talk all night about a lot of these different things and bring out different points in our own communities. We're happy to support this legislation. We thank you for the support you've given us and the input over the years and hope that it becomes successful legislation and we can get a vote passed very quickly and get it proclaimed as quickly as possible.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Comments and questions? Further debate? The member for Welland.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Thank you kindly, Speaker.

Applause.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Just wait. You may not want to be too eager about that.

New Democrats are pleased that the bill is up for third reading. We're not going to spend a great deal of time on third reading debate. The opposition parties signalled very clearly early on in this whole process that we were anxious to get the bill passed before the House rose June 2. Obviously, if it didn't pass before June 2 it wouldn't happen until after the next election and then firefighters would have to deal with a whole new government and start all over again.

Interjections.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Well, I'm not suggesting who that government is made up of. The people of Ontario will decide what the government looks like, but it will be a new government.

This has been a long time coming, ever since the ill-thought-out elimination of retirement age by this govern-

ment. I recall it so well. It was about dignity. Do you remember that? The dignity of being able to work when you're 80. The dignity of being a greeter at Walmart because you can't afford to pay the hydro bills or the HST when you're a senior citizen.

I congratulate firefighters for their perseverance. I invite them for their commitment to the welfare of their sisters and brothers in their profession. I look forward to firefighters who, when they retire at the age of 60, embark on the sorts of things that retired people should be able to do, whether it's taking care of your grandkids or going on the vacations you never could when you were working or doing volunteer work, or simply putting your feet up on the back stoop or porch and having a soda pop. I wish that there were so many other workers in this province who would be able to do that, with real pensions.

Eight years of this government, and we've seen fewer and fewer workers with defined benefit pension plans here in the province of Ontario.

Interjection.

Mr. Peter Kormos: No, members of the Legislature chose, in a unanimous vote, a defined contribution pension plan. I remember it well, in 1996. Other workers don't choose that. They have it forced on them. Here we are in this Legislature, Liberals, Conservatives, New Democrats abolished the defined benefit pension plan—a very robust one that MPPs had—and replaced it with a defined contribution. But more and more workers in this province have no pension plan at all. Their defined benefit pension plans are crumbling. Of course, the government's pension guarantee fund stuck at \$1,000 a month does little for those workers—whether they're workers down at Atlas Steel in Welland, who had a pension plan wind up, who retired and thought things were fine until they discovered that the plan was seriously defunded. Of course, we saw the “too big to fail” operations, including the auto sector, with grossly underfunded, defunded pension plans.

So I wish that we could celebrate this for all workers here in the province of Ontario. But I commend firefighters for having fought for it, and again, for having fought for it year after year.

I'm sure they were troubled at certain points whether this was ever going to happen. I analyze these things a little bit. I wonder if a pending election helped to make it happen, if a political party in power wanted to woo firefighter support and figured that this is as good a way of doing it as any, because it seems to me it could have been done a year ago, two years ago. It could have been done shortly after the the Human Rights Code was amended here in the province of Ontario to eliminate retirement age. It was an oversight. The police weren't omitted in the course of excluding them; firefighters were.

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I share the concern of my colleague from the official opposition, Mr. Dunlop, when it comes to firefighters in the Ministry of Natural Resources not having the same access to pensions, and I look forward to pursuing that with him.

I share concerns around volunteer firefighters because I come from communities that have blended fire services with the professional firefighters. It's always incumbent upon professional firefighters to ensure adequate staffing. They have to fight for that on a regular basis to ensure adequate resources and to ensure that they have the tools with which to do a very dangerous and increasingly complex job.

This is going to go to a vote tonight. Peculiarly, perversely, Liberals will vote against this bill tonight. It's a tactic. I consider it an asinine tactic and a silly one. But you will see Liberals voting against this bill tonight when they could have had a unanimous vote in the Legislature before 10 o'clock at night.

Interjection.

Mr. Peter Kormos: The problem is, nobody knows where the Liberals stand. The nice thing about being a Liberal is that you don't always have to be a Liberal. You can be a right-winger. Ask Kim Craitor from down Niagara Falls way. He stands in every position that mankind ever created and some positions that mankind never discovered yet.

I want to close with this: This was a rare occasion when there was a collaborative effort on the part of the opposition parties with the government. We signalled, as I say, early on that we wanted this to proceed promptly on second reading. We indicated that, again, we regard it important, as due diligence, to have committee hearings. We didn't think that it was necessary for there to be extensive committee hearings, but they were valuable because, in fact, the government amended the bill during the course of those committee hearings. To have done otherwise would have meant putting the bill into committee of the whole, and I don't know whether your government House leader has ever had experience with legislation in committee of the whole but it would have been a delightful thing to have happened. I recall those with great fondness as an opposition member and even from time to time as a government backbencher. They're delightful tools that people have.

I thank the minister for his perseverance. I noticed he thanked his colleague the Minister of Community Safety. I suspect that he forgot to thank the opposition parties for their co-operation on the matter. It was rather graceless and amateurish in its own right, but, hey—

Interjections.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Well, it was. It was graceless and amateurish, and I think the minister missed a great opportunity on behalf of his government to signal that it can work with other parties rather than merely rely upon the heavy hand and the heeled boot of majority government. But I suspect that, as well, Ontarians and Ontario voters will recognize that come October 6.

Thanks, Speaker. Let's put this to a vote and watch the Liberals vote against it.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Sousa has moved third reading of Bill 181. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 30-minute bell.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): "Pursuant to standing order 28(a), I request that the vote on Bill 181, An Act to amend the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997, Minister Sousa, be deferred until Tuesday, May 31, 2011."

Third reading vote deferred.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Orders of the day.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I move adjournment of the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The House leader has moved adjournment of the House.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Order. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Mr. Peter Kormos: On division.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): On division.

This House stands adjourned until 9 a.m. tomorrow.

The House adjourned at 2145.

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Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Brown, Michael A. (LIB)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Brownell, Jim (LIB)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Caplan, David (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Carroll, Hon. / L'hon. Aileen (LIB)	Barrie	
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Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
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Crozier, Bruce (LIB)	Essex	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
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Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
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Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
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Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
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Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Hoy, Pat (LIB)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Johnson, Rick (LIB)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kormos, Peter (NDP)	Welland	Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
Kular, Kuldip (LIB)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Jean-Marc (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Leal, Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	
Levac, Dave (LIB)	Brant	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Cambridge	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Premier / Premier ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
McMeekin, Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
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Journal des débats (Hansard)

Tuesday 31 May 2011

Mardi 31 mai 2011

Speaker
Honourable Steve Peters

Président
L'honorable Steve Peters

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 31 May 2011

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 31 mai 2011

The House met at 0900.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Good morning. Please remain standing for the Lord's Prayer, followed by the Sikh prayer.

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

McMICHAEL CANADIAN ART COLLECTION AMENDMENT ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA COLLECTION McMICHAEL D'ART CANADIEN

Ms. Smith moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 188, An Act to amend the McMichael Canadian Art Collection Act / Projet de loi 188, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Collection McMichael d'art canadien.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I'd like to wish a happy Tuesday to the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound and call government order 188.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Debate?

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I'll be sharing my time this morning with the member from York South-Weston, and I'm delighted that we are debating Bill 188 this morning. I know that all three parties have taken a good, hard look at it and I know that it's going to move through swiftly this morning, and we appreciate that co-operation.

Now I will defer to the member for York South-Weston.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: Before I begin, I would like to welcome Jamie Cameron, the trustee of the board, who is here with us today in the east members' gallery.

On behalf of the Minister of Tourism and Culture, I am proud to present Bill 188, An Act to amend the McMichael Canadian Art Collection Act, for its third reading today.

I would like to begin by extending my appreciation to the surviving McMichael family members, the Fenwicks, along with their legal representative; Chair Upkar Arora and the board of the McMichael Canadian Art Collection; members of the opposition; and those who contributed to the committee hearings held two weeks ago to discuss this important bill, namely the presenters: Upkar Arora, chair of the McMichael board; Victoria Dickenson, executive director of the McMichael Canadian Art Collection; Michael Burns, director and former chair of the McMichael; and Joyce Frustaglio, the former deputy

mayor of the city of Vaughan and former board member of the McMichael. I wish to thank all of those who have actively participated in bringing Bill 188 to its third reading this morning. The positive show of support for our proposed amendments demonstrates a widely held understanding that the McMichael Canadian Art Collection is in need of change. Right now, we have an incredible opportunity before us—an opportunity to help one of our most treasured cultural institutions. Bill 188 gives us that opportunity.

The McMichael Canadian Art Collection must not only survive as a cultural institution, but thrive. We all know that the McMichael Canadian Art Collection is an important and invaluable institution. It is an iconic gallery that preserves our artistic heritage. It showcases our art and artists and it supports jobs and the local economy. But the McMichael needs our help if it is to continue to be sustainable. The McMichael needs flexibility to renew its collection, to grow and to rejuvenate its exhibitions, allowing it to better reflect Ontario and Canada's diversity and ongoing developments in Canadian art, and to attract more visitors and enhance interest in its collection. However, the McMichael's current legislation limits its ability to do just that.

That is why we are proposing amendments to the McMichael Canadian Art Collection Act to address the needs of the gallery today. These changes, if passed, would provide the gallery with the flexibility to develop diverse innovative exhibitions while ensuring that the McMichael's legacy continues to be protected; make it easier for the McMichael to build its collection while ensuring a continued focus on the Group of Seven, their contemporaries and the aboriginal peoples of Canada; help the McMichael to renew, refresh and revitalize so that it can appeal to a broader, more diverse audience; and remove the requirement for an art advisory committee, making the McMichael legislation consistent with other Canadian and international art institutions.

This will allow the gallery's board and management to develop policies for the acquisition of arts within the framework of their renewed collection mandate as they are in the best position to determine what to collect or exhibit. Additionally, the amendments in Bill 188 would bring the McMichael in line with current industry standards and practices for Canadian museums and galleries.

The proposed amendments in Bill 188 were developed very carefully from recommendations submitted by the McMichael board, in consultation with the McMichael surviving relatives and their representatives. I am pleased that we have their support.

The McMichael Canadian Art Collection is undoubtedly one of our most significant cultural institutions. It is home to one of the most well-known collections of Canadian art, founded by the generous gift of Robert and Signe McMichael in 1965. By giving the gallery the flexibility to adapt and remain sustainable, we will ensure that Robert and Signe McMichael's legacy continues to be recognized and protected.

The McMichael has helped thousands of visitors discover the beauty of Canada's landscape through the work of some of our most revered artists. Currently, the gallery attracts almost 90,000 visitors a year but there is potential for even greater growth as cultural tourism is quickly becoming an increasingly competitive market. Today, we are united in our conviction. Today, we are working together to reach a common goal. Today's third reading of Bill 188 demonstrates our commitment to see the McMichael succeed.

The time has come to update and streamline the McMichael legislation to help the McMichael continue to grow and inspire new visitors from within our borders and beyond while ensuring that Robert and Signe McMichael's legacy continues to be celebrated by future generations.

Bill 188 will support the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, allowing it to realize its full potential and enjoy greater success. I ask for your support to help this bill pass swiftly.

0910

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Questions and comments?

Further debate?

Mr. Ted Arnott: Thomson, Jackson, MacDonald, Harris, Lismer, Varley, Carmichael, Casson, Johnston, FitzGerald and McMichael: some of the most illustrious names in the history of Canadian art. On behalf of the official opposition, I'm very pleased to have this opportunity today to speak in favour of the McMichael Canadian Art Collection Amendment Act, 2011.

First and foremost, I will say again that Tim Hudak and the Ontario PC caucus want the McMichael Canadian Art Collection gallery to succeed into the future. We also want to see the memory of Bob and Signe McMichael, as well as their generous philanthropy, remembered forever, ensuring that the collection will always be enjoyed not just by a select few but by all Canadians and those around the world.

We also believe that the Group of Seven, their contemporaries and First Nations artists should continue to be the primary focus of the collection, in keeping with the vision of the founders—and I say again, the primary focus. That is our belief. Any serious effort that would further these worthy goals should, I believe, merit the support of this House.

I want to share again a recent experience I had in Wellington-Halton Hills at an event in one of the communities in my riding, in Elora. Earlier this month, I attended Artcetera, a three-day fundraising silent and live art auction featuring our local and regional artists. The

proceeds from this event benefited one of our province's premier arts organizations, the Elora Centre for the Arts, as well as our local and regional artists.

The Elora Centre for the Arts continues to be a tremendous asset in our community, and this event went a long way to make it even stronger. I want to inform the House of the Elora Centre for the Arts' own account of their role and mission:

"The Elora Centre for the Arts is a vibrant and community-oriented arts organization that inspires and stimulates artistic excellence, aesthetic maturity and critical insight through exhibition, performance and education. It is a national model of a regional centre for artistic endeavour and education.

"It provides opportunities for both artists and the broader community to engage in artistic pursuits of all kinds in a unique historic setting. It offers innovative and creative programs in a broad range of disciplines, including visual arts, spoken word, music, dance and crafts.

"It serves as a home for the local and regional artistic community and provides a venue for people of all ages to experience enriching artistic activities and expression. The centre is a leader in and encourages artistic freedom of expression, innovation and creativity.

"Through its arts education programming, it encourages youth to embrace the arts as integral to life" itself.

To me, Artcetera only confirmed that the Elora Centre for the Arts is indeed fulfilling that important and impressive mission in our community and beyond. For that, I want to again thank and congratulate everyone involved, the staff and volunteers, for making Artcetera such a success.

Even though we may not be directly involved in the arts, we as MPPs have the opportunity and indeed, I would argue, the responsibility to contribute to the success of the arts in the province of Ontario.

In 1994 and 1995, during my first term as an elected member of this House, I was honoured to serve as the PC critic for culture, as I do today. At that time, we were the third party in the Legislature. You'll recall those days, Madam Speaker. Bob McMichael came to visit me at my constituency office in Arthur; at that time, we were located in my home community.

At that meeting, he invited me to come to Kleinburg to tour the McMichael Canadian Collection and visit him and Signe at their new, scenic home in Belfountain. When I finally had the chance and the opportunity to visit, I was overwhelmed by the McMichaels' warm hospitality. I spent about an hour with Bob and Signe, and they showed me their still-private collection of Canadian art which adorned their walls in their home. I'll never forget it.

Looking at that Canadian art and listening to Bob and Signe, Ontarians who have done so much for the arts in our province, was very much a privilege for me. Their passion was palpable and their vision was clear. Even at that time, they were especially concerned about the need to preserve that vision, their vision for the McMichael Canadian Collection that they had founded. And while it

became a public collection because of their very public generosity, it really was their collection, one that they had acquired on their own with their own resources before donating it to the province for all to appreciate.

To be sure, I found this special couple to be very inspiring. And so I was pleased when, in the year 2000, our government passed legislation which Bob had sought, ensuring that as long as he and Signe were alive, they would continue to have a very significant role in the decisions to acquire new works of art and the temporary exhibitions that the gallery is so proud to show off.

When I reassumed my role as critic to the Minister of Culture in 2009, I knew that one of the first places that I wanted to again visit was the McMichael Canadian Collection, as I've done more than once over the years since I first visited during my university days in the 1980s. I visited again in September 2009. While the gallery is never the same as on a previous visit, it remains one of my favourite art galleries, as it is for many Ontarians.

The history of this gallery is absolutely remarkable. Bob and Signe began their collection in 1955, and just 10 years later, it had expanded to over 300 works. In co-operation with the provincial government, the McMichaels donated the collection and their home in Kleinburg to the province of Ontario. The province, in turn, assumed responsibility for the protection and maintenance of the artwork and grounds. This took place in 1965 when the gallery was known as the McMichael Conservation Collection of Art. In 1972, Premier Bill Davis, one of Ontario's greatest Premiers, introduced legislation changing the name to the McMichael Canadian Collection. The legislation also appointed Bob McMichael as director and formed a nine-member board of trustees. In 1981, Bob resigned the directorship and became founder director emeritus. Meanwhile, Michael Bell was appointed director and chief executive officer. In 1982, Ian Thom joined the staff, becoming the curator of collections.

In the years following its inception as a public gallery, the collection broadened to accommodate the McMichaels' vision to include First Nations and Inuit prints, sculptures, paintings and masks. Also added were the works of artists such as Clarence Gagnon, Lionel LeMoine FitzGerald and J.W. Morrice. But the original Group of Seven has always been the primary focus of the gallery, along with the works of Tom Thomson. That's a fitting focus for a gallery set in such a beautiful, natural setting. This leads me to quote from the Group of Seven catalogue from 1920, as published by the McMichael Canadian Collection in their book in 1983:

"The Group of Seven artists whose pictures are here exhibited have for several years held a like vision concerning art in Canada. We are all imbued with the idea that an art must grow and flower in the land before the country will be a real home for its people."

While none of us here today was present in 1920, I was very fortunate to have been present at the 1991 ceremony awarding A.J. Casson the Order of Ontario. I

think perhaps the only MPP who was prouder than me to be there was Premier Bob Rae, who seemed to be having the time of his life. But, for me, to be in the presence of this iconic figure of Canadian culture, A.J. Casson, just a few months before he passed away, was an amazing privilege I'll never forget. As I've said many times, the McMichael showcases the very best in our province and our country. We want the McMichael to succeed; indeed, to continue to show our very best to the world.

We've been told that the number of visitors to the McMichael in recent years has diminished somewhat. We heard that reiterated during the committee hearings. Given that this government has not fully recognized the enormous potential represented by Ontario's tourism industry, this fact is perhaps not overly surprising. I'm told that in 2009-10, there were more than 97,000 visitors, while in 2010-11 that number had slipped slightly to around 89,000 visitors. The question, therefore, is this: How do we reverse that trend, bringing more visitors, bringing repeat visitors, bringing new visitors to experience the McMichael? This should be part of a concerted strategy to market Ontario as the premier tourist destination that we on this side of the House know that it is: the best attractions, the best hospitality, the best festivals and the best events.

And what about the Sorbara report and its many recommendations that seem to be gathering dust? What about its aim to double tourism receipts by 2020? What about its call to bring our tourism and cultural attractions up to leading global standards? What about its call to take action to fundamentally improve tourism in Ontario? The government's pace in making these changes is frustrating and slow. We are not making the progress we need to make to meet and exceed those global standards.

In the McMichael we have a cultural gem that can be counted as one of the best in the world, but how do we ensure that people know that, both at home and abroad? Will Bill 188 contribute to that success? We sincerely hope so. I was encouraged to read that the chair of the McMichael Canadian Collection, as well as Penny and Jack Fenwick, members of the McMichael family, are supporting this bill. Given their written endorsements and given that we have received no indications of opposition at this time to this legislation from within Ontario's artistic community or within the province, the official opposition will support the bill at third reading.

0920

Again, Madam Speaker, I want to thank you for this opportunity to speak about an institution of such importance to the arts in the province of Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Comments and questions? Further debate?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I just want to take a couple of minutes on behalf of New Democrats and our leader, Andrea Horwath, to support this legislation. You would have heard, in the previous debate, our critic, Mr. Tabuns, who spoke more at length on this particular issue. But I think people understand why this is so necessary now.

This is not the first time we've been in the Legislature on this issue. I remember some years ago an attempt—I

guess it was about 10 years ago—when similar legislation was sought. There was some difficulty, certainly disagreement within the community, which was unfortunate in that we weren't able to get the consensus back then. It led to it not being able to make its way through the House here. So it's good that people finally understand that we need to provide some of the flexibility that will be created in this legislation to allow the gallery to continue so that it's there for the years to come. We know that it's tough hoeing out there when it comes to trying to attract tourists into our communities and into our various facilities such as the McMichael. McMichael has done rather well, but they need to position themselves into the future.

Certainly, volumes could be said about their collection. If you haven't seen them, you've heard of them. You've studied them in your history class. You've seen them on the various documentaries that exist, from the National Film Board to the CBC to TVO and others who have done countless work in regard to the work of the Group of Seven and others who are the subject of the McMichael gallery. I think it's only fitting that this legislation be put forward.

I would go one step a little bit further, and this is just my musing, not the musing of any particular policy on behalf of New Democrats. But I think we're going to have to get our heads at one point around the idea of museums from the perspective of how we support our museums across Ontario—McMichael and others—to do the work that they've got to do.

I look at the Timmins Museum, which has struggled over the years to get the support that it needs in order to do the job that it should do. We have a particular history in Timmins that's specific to our region. We are now 100 years old as a community. There's a lot of history vis-à-vis how Timmins was founded and developed through mining, and eventually through forestry, the TNO railway and others. There's a lot of interest on the part of many in regard to that particular history.

But what I guess strikes me is that neither at the municipal, provincial or federal level do we provide the kind of support that museums need—and libraries, I would argue, as well—in order to provide the services that have to be provided in our communities. I know that some people would say, "Oh, if there are cost-cutting exercises, go cut the museum; go cut the library." That's kind of the sense of some within municipal chambers, certainly this chamber and the federal House as well. But I would argue, contrary to that, that if we don't do a good job of preserving our history and we don't do a good job of showcasing our history so that we all can learn more about where we come from and what that history is, I think then we have a harder time trying to figure out how to go forward.

I read a lot of history; that's probably the only thing I read other than a little bit of science fiction every now and then—that's kind of my trash read. When I want to disconnect, I do a little bit of sci-fi. But I primarily read history.

The interest to me is the interest, I think, of many others. I find the study of history interesting because it gives you an insight on how man, over a period of time—and I say "man" in the vernacular term. How we have shaped our decisions and why we've come to the institutions that we have today and why we do things the way that we do today is based on the history of not just yesterday, not just 50 years ago, not just 100 years ago, but literally thousands of years ago. If you go back and take a look—for example, I'm reading a book right now on Ghengis Khan and the empire that he and his children built. There's a lot of interesting history to be learned about how the rest of Europe and how Persia and Asia were affected as a result of what they called the Mongol hordes back then that we are still feeling today.

In a place like Timmins, and I just come back to the museum issue, it's important that the people in our region understand—those who come to visit and who live there—what it was like for the people that first came into the Timmins area back in the early 1900s and the struggles they had to build a community. I think you need to showcase that.

I would argue that, yes, this legislation is necessary. We will vote for it and support it. Our leader, Andrea Horwath, is glad to do that. But we need to take a look at the issue of how we're better able to support our museums and our libraries so that, in fact, we can do the kind of work that needs to be done in order for our communities to better understand the history of our regions.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. Comments and questions? Further debate?

Ms. Smith has moved third reading of Bill 188. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

This vote will be deferred until after question period.

Third reading vote deferred.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Orders of the day?

Hon. Monique M. Smith: We have no further business.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): There being no further business, this House stands recessed until 10:30 of the clock.

The House recessed from 0926 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. James J. Bradley: I'd like to introduce Mr. Jim Christie, interim president of the Ontario Provincial Police Association, along with Hailey Griffis and James Christie. They are spending a day with my senior policy adviser to see how an individual like that works within the government framework.

I'd also like to introduce Margo and Dick Standish and Peter and Linda Hammond.

Hon. Carol Mitchell: I'm very pleased to announce that the Ontario Cattlemen's Association is in town

today, encouraging all members and staff to come to the barbecue, the most popular event of the whole year. Everyone, it's just being served outside.

Welcome, Dave Stewart, John Lunn and Dan Darling, and thank you for all of your hard work in making today a reality.

Mr. Khalil Ramal: I'd like to introduce Scott Bowman, the director of government relations for the Canadian Youth Business Foundation. He's here with five other youth business persons who came to see the debate at Queen's Park. Welcome.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: I'd like to welcome a couple of my constituents to Queen's Park: John Suk and his wife, Irene Oudyk-Suk. Welcome.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: Making their way into the Legislative Assembly today are my staff, Phia Sanchez, Karen Berkeley, Adrienne Guthrie and David Palmer. As well, I'd just like to recognize my staff who are here every day: Krystina Ceccarelli, my chief of staff, and Paul Tye, my legislative assistant, who have done such a great job in the House leader's office.

Mr. Bill Murdoch: I don't know whether they're in yet or not but I do have a couple from my riding: Kees and Linda van Aalst, and my nephew, whose name is Mike Harris.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Further introductions?

I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome, on behalf of the member from Welland, Deb Haswell, mayor of Owen Sound, and David Inglis, mayor of Brockton; and Eddie Almeida, Jayson Alward, Greg Hamara, Greg Hope, Paul Johnston, Chris Peabody, Marnie Niemi Hood, Dan Sidsworth, Mike Grimaldi, Mike Fowler and Fred LeBlanc. Welcome to Queen's Park today.

On behalf of the member from Oak Ridges–Markham and page Melanie Soltau, we'd like to welcome her mother, Karen, to the Legislature today.

From my riding of Elgin–Middlesex–London I'd like to welcome students and educators from Regina Mundi Catholic College, who will be joining us at Queen's Park today. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Seated in the Speaker's gallery, from the Office of the Integrity Commissioner, I'd like to welcome Edward Gan, Rebecca Valero and Ian Stedman. Welcome to Queen's Park today.

And of course, a big welcome to my brother, Joe Peters.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Hey man, I think you're in the wrong business. You might want to give up funeral directing and think about politics. Things might be a little more lively here.

NHL HOCKEY FRANCHISES

Mr. Paul Miller: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'm requesting all-party consent to support an NHL franchise in Hamilton, and I want to congratulate Winnipeg on its returned NHL franchise.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Agreed? Agreed.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: If Hamilton gets a franchise, Toronto will want one too.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): That's not a point of order.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: That's the truth.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): It may be the truth, but—

ANNUAL REPORT, ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSIONER OF ONTARIO

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I beg to inform the House that today I have laid upon the table the 2011 annual greenhouse gas progress report from the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario, entitled Meeting Responsibilities: Creating Opportunities.

ORAL QUESTIONS

TAXATION

Mr. Tim Hudak: My question is, I guess, to the Deputy Premier. Deputy Premier, with Changebook the Ontario PCs have put forward a fully costed plan to give families the relief they need and to end—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I certainly sense how anxious people are, as young children anticipate Christmas, and certainly the Speaker is counting that there are two more sleeps left, but I would just beg the indulgence of all members right now that as we lead up to the closing days of this session we endeavour to be as respectful as we possibly can to one another.

Please continue.

Mr. Tim Hudak: Changebook is a plan to give families the relief they need and to end the waste, fraud and secret deals that have become the hallmark of the McGuinty government.

Our party is the only party to put a plan on the table, Changebook, to bring positive change across the province. The Ontario Liberal Party is keeping their plan hidden from the general public. And do you know why? Because they plan to increase taxes once again on hard-working Ontario families. Minister, is it a carbon tax, is it an HST increase—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Acting Premier.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: It's neither. I think he's running for Premier of Fantasy Island.

Let's talk about the PC slick book, because it's nothing more than a public relations exercise that has a multi-billion-dollar hole that that leader and his party are not accounting for: 229 promises in the slick book, not all of them costed. Hidden cuts: Is it going to be schools this time, like it was when you were part of the Mike Harris

government? Is it going to be teachers? Is it going to be municipalities? How are you going to fund the uploads that we've reversed from what you did when you were last in office?

He wants to be Premier of Fantasy Island. We want to lead Ontario to a better future, with better jobs and better—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Members will please come to order. We have a number of guests here today.

Supplementary.

Mr. Tim Hudak: Minister, you know Changebook will give families the relief they need and end the waste, fraud and secret deals that are the hallmark of the Liberal government. I don't know why you're afraid to put your plan on the table. Why are you keeping it hidden? I guess it's because they plan to bring in a carbon tax. The Ontario PC Party believes energy costs on families and businesses are high enough. Your plan to bring in a carbon tax will increase the cost of energy. It will increase the cost of gasoline. Basically, the Liberal carbon tax will increase the cost of everything and the Liberal carbon tax will be a job killer.

I ask the minister, exactly how much revenue do you plan to bring in from the Dalton McGuinty carbon tax?

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I remind the honourable member that we use titles and riding names.

Minister of Finance?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: We laid out our numbers in this document. And do you know what? We tabled this with the auditor, and we've asked the auditor to comment on the veracity of the numbers, because you and your government left a hidden \$5.5-billion deficit.

Let me ask the Leader of the Opposition, will you put your platform numbers to the auditor? Will you ask him to verify them? My guess is you won't, because there are hidden, multi-billion-dollar cuts—cuts to health, cuts to education, cuts to municipalities and lost jobs.

1040

If you're a teacher, if you're a nurse, if you're a student going into full-day learning, look out, because they're coming after you. We're going to fight them every step of the way. We're not going to let them undo the progress that Ontarians have made in cleaning up the mess that your government left.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Final supplementary.

Mr. Tim Hudak: Ontario families look at the last eight years of job losses, of waste, of secret deals with Liberal friends and insiders, and they say, "Enough. It's time for change in the province of Ontario." I say to the finance minister: It's true; the Ontario PCs have Changebook. The Green Party leader at least had the guts to put his plan out there. Dalton McGuinty continues to hide what his—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I remind the honourable member for a second time about the use of

names or titles, and if he persists one more time I'm just going to skip him and we'll go to the next question.

Please continue.

Mr. Tim Hudak: The McGuinty Liberals continue to keep their tax hikes hidden from the public. The Green leader is calling for a carbon tax, a carbon tax that we're convinced the McGuinty Liberals support. You refuse to criticize the Green leader's carbon tax. Isn't it true, Minister, that you want to bring in a carbon tax after the next election campaign?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: I ask the Leader of the Opposition to put his numbers to the Auditor General. Let's take one example: Let's talk about their plan to put prisoners in parks. They haven't costed that. In every chain gang they want to put 25 prisoners with one guard in every park across Ontario. Does that make any sense whatsoever? And it's not—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Simcoe North will withdraw the comment that he just—

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Please continue.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: This government put police officers in the parks; they want to put prisoners in the parks, and they won't cost it. Their slick book is nothing but an uncoded, dangerous plan to cut health care, to cut education, to undermine the future of our municipalities and to raise property taxes.

We've got a plan. We've submitted it to the auditor. I'd invite them to do it. The people of Ontario, when they see the numbers, will reject it. They want a better future for our children—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

TAXATION

Mr. Tim Hudak: Back to the Deputy Premier: I know the McGuinty Liberals' approach is to have the prisoners engage in freeing-the-human-spirit Zen yoga classes. You gave them HD cable packages until you got caught. Ontario families support our plan to have prisoners give back to society through manual labour. It seems like the only people who oppose this are the McGuinty Liberals and, I guess, the prisoners.

Minister, I'll ask you again: Your own environment minister has said that a carbon tax is something to look at. I know that members on your benches are salivating at bringing in a carbon tax that will increase the cost of everything, and the minister was fast-tracked to the cabinet. Why won't you just say no to a carbon tax? Why—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Minister.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: We've laid out the broadest personal tax cuts in Ontario history. We've submitted them to the auditor. We've asked for his position on them. We've asked him to verify the veracity of our numbers.

Their slick book is nothing more than a hidden plan that will cut jobs, cut health care and cut education. I challenge the leader of that party: Put your numbers to the auditor. Come clean with Ontarians. We've done that as we implement the tax cuts that we've laid out.

By the way, I'm proud that they finally endorse the HST. For two years, you've been standing against it, rattling on and on about how bad it is, and now we know they're going to keep it. This government, this party, has a plan. We're implementing it. The auditor will verify it. I challenge them to do the same thing, and we'll see them at the ballot box on October 6.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: Minister, we are going to take your HST off home heating and hydro bills and the debt retirement charge and give average families a break. Come on. You're saying that the McGuinty Liberals have lowered taxes on families? I've not found one single person who has agreed with that; not even your members.

Talk about a gang that's bound and determined to stay on Fantasy Island: You increased taxes on hard-working families, on senior citizens and on small businesses. The Ontario PCs and Changebook will give average families relief, the break they deserve and the change that they need. Why won't you?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Members, please come to order. Stop the clock.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Minister?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: This is the leader who said that he would fight tooth and nail to abolish the HST, and this weekend he has confirmed he's keeping it. When we introduced the Ontario clean energy benefit and reduced electricity bills by 10%, what was his response? He's going to cancel that and he's going to take off 8%, so he's actually going to raise the price. That's part of the hidden plan, as well as the multi-billion-dollar hole in their numbers.

The people of Ontario have seen this movie before. They lived through the cuts to health care and education. They value their public services. They want better public services, a better economy and a stronger future for their children. We've laid out the plan and submitted it to the auditor. We're going to stand on that, and the people of Ontario will stand with us because they want those public services delivered in an effective way, which we've been doing for eight years now.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Final supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: I think, sadly, that the finance minister has come badly unglued. I cannot believe that you're actually saying with a straight face that the McGuinty Liberals have lowered hydro bills. I can't believe you're saying with a straight face that the McGuinty Liberals have lowered taxes. Nobody believes you anymore, and that's why they want to see change here in the province of Ontario.

Your environment minister wants to see a carbon tax. Your Minister of Research and Innovation says, "Let's

get used to these two words: carbon tax." You gave Jeff Rubin a standing ovation at your so-called thinkers' conference when he called for a carbon tax. Why won't you just be honest with the people of Ontario and talk about the McGuinty Liberal carbon tax and how much it's going to cost Ontario families?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: Our tax plan for jobs and growth has now been endorsed by their leading expert at finance committee. This is about a government that has a vision for leadership that believes in public services. We won't close schools. We won't lay off teachers. We will continue to make investments.

Their slick book is uncoded; it leaves a multi-billion-dollar hole in their numbers. They haven't dealt with every ministry except education and health care, and even then, we suspect that in order to achieve the results that they want to achieve, they will have to hit them hard and hit them often.

We're going to continue to invest in our families, our children, our communities, our health care and education. That's what Ontarians want. That's what they'll vote for on October 6: a plan that looks to the future with hope and optimism for a better—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you.

Interjections.

1050

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Welcome to my friends from Regina Mundi in the Speaker's gallery, and what you are about to observe you would not get away with in your classroom.

New question?

TAXATION

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I'm not going to take that personal, Speaker.

My question is to the Acting Premier. On Sunday, the Conservatives proposed an expensive tax cut that disproportionately benefits wealthy Ontarians called income splitting. The Harper Conservatives are also committed to the same scheme.

Are the McGuinty Liberals planning to move ahead with income splitting when the federal government does?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: The federal government has indicated that. The government will take that into advisement at the time. The reality is that Ontario may be compelled to follow that, depending on how it's framed by the federal government and whether or not they frame it that way.

We've laid out our tax plan for jobs and growth, which we believe will create jobs, help families moving forward and lower taxes for Ontarians of more modest incomes. Depending on what is framed by the federal government, we will have to wait and see what the response would be, because it could well be the fact that we would have to move in tandem with the federal government.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Income splitting does provide some relief, but to those families that need the help the

least. Two thirds of the benefit will go to the minority of families making over \$100,000 a year and one million households will not benefit at all. Staff from the Ministry of Finance have told reporters here that Ontario will follow suit when Stephen Harper brings this forward. I just want to know from this Minister of Finance, is that his plan?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: Our plan has been very clearly articulated. We have cut taxes for low-income Ontarians. We cut the rate on the first \$37,000 of income; it's now the lowest in Canada. We created the Ontario child benefit, which benefits people of more modest incomes.

The challenge with income splitting is whether or not the provinces will have to move in tandem or not. At this point, it may be that we do, but we're not certain. It'll depend on how it is framed by the federal government. We'll look forward to seeing what's in the federal budget and we'll be in a better position to respond once we've seen that.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Final supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Income splitting will cost the Ontario treasury roughly \$600 million. That's on top of the \$1.8 billion in corporate tax giveaways. There are far better ways to provide families with the help that they desperately need.

Has this government even spoken to the federal government to look at alternatives, or have they already decided to move ahead in tandem with Stephen Harper?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: What we can be clear about is that we won't cut the Ontario child benefit, which she voted against, which helps more lower-income Ontarians. We've taken 90,000 Ontarians of low income off the tax rolls completely. She voted against that.

We will respond appropriately once we've seen the federal proposal. One has to look at a variety of factors that are associated with this: who benefits, who doesn't, how it fits in with the broader tax package.

I'll remind the member opposite that we have cut taxes for low-income Ontarians, 93% of Ontarians in total, which they voted against.

Our plan is balanced, it's right and it creates a climate for more and better jobs going forward. That's what it's about. We look forward to working with everyone in Ontario to build a better economy for the future.

TAXATION

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I ask these questions because we've seen this movie once before. It happened with the unfair HST. It happened with the corporate tax giveaway. First the McGuinty Liberals say they're going to fight a Conservative policy, and then they turn around and make it happen.

Are the McGuinty Liberals now admitting that it's going to happen with income splitting as well?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: We don't know what the leader of the NDP wants to do with the HST. Is she going to repeal it or is she going to keep it?

She reminds me of the leader of her federal party, who went to British Columbia and said, "The HST is bad," then went to Nova Scotia, where there's an NDP government that raised the HST, and said, "This is good public policy." Is she going to do that? Is she going to raise the HST? Let's just hear: Are you going to eliminate it or keep it and raise it? Mr. Speaker, we need answers from them.

We've laid out where we're at, with clear numbers that we submitted to the auditor, something that neither opposition party has done.

I look forward to hearing what she's going to do about the HST, because right now, she's trying to have it every which way. The people of Ontario will see through that very quickly.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Let's just take a look at history: Not only did the Harper Conservatives urge the McGuinty Liberals to adopt the HST, but they offered big bucks to do it, and the McGuinty Liberals willingly complied. The McGuinty Liberals railed against corporate tax giveaways, but then adopted Jim Flaherty's plan.

Have eight long years made the McGuinty Liberals forget why they were even elected in the first place?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: We were elected to do full-day learning, and we're doing it. We were elected to undo the downloading to municipalities of the Harris-Hudak government, and we're doing that—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I remind the honourable member on the term that he just used, and it's been ruled out of order in the past.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: I apologize.

We're undoing the damage left by the previous government. We were elected to invest in hospitals, and we're doing that. We were elected to reduce wait times for a whole variety of services, and we're doing that. We were elected to make Ontario a more competitive and a better place to do business. We're lifting the burden from municipalities. We were elected to improve those public services, and we're doing it every single day.

The people of Ontario welcome the changes we've brought about to make sure they have the best health care and the best education services in all the world.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Here are the people this government keeps forgetting. Patti Sookraj from Toronto writes: "I am a widow and struggling to pay my bills, especially the hydro bill. I have to limit myself to other necessities every month, just to pay my hydro bill."

Income splitting will not help Ms. Sookraj; she's on her own. Neither will corporate tax giveaways; they're not helping any households. The unfair HST, of course, does affect her. It makes her life a lot harder. When will the McGuinty Liberals stop listening to Stephen Harper and start listening to people like Patti?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: When we lowered the tax rate for low-income Ontarians, that helped her constituent, and she voted against it. When we created the Ontario

child benefit to help low-income Ontarians, that member and her party voted against it. That would have helped her constituent. When we created a variety of tax credits to lower the cost of living for Ontarians, that member and her party voted against it and voted against that woman who has raised these concerns. When we created the Ontario clean energy benefit, which will help her constituent, that member and her party turned their back on her constituent and voted against it.

We've laid out a balanced plan that invests in our public health care, invests in public education and creates a better climate for more jobs and a brighter future for all of our children. That's what it's all about. And just tell us what you'll do with the HST.

HYDRO RATES

Mr. Tim Hudak: My question is to the Minister of Energy. Minister, as you know, through Changebook, the Ontario PC Party will give average families \$275 of relief on their home heating and hydro bills. Under the McGuinty Liberals' tax book, hydro rates and taxes will continue to go through the roof. We know that Premier McGuinty wants families to pay more and more.

We find out today that your former chair of the Ontario Power Authority, Jan Carr, in a C.D. Howe report, has said that under your unsustainable feed-in tariff program, bills for seniors and average families will go up an additional \$310 a year.

We will give \$275 a year in relief. They want bills to go up another \$310. Do you think families can afford \$600 more on their home—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Minister?

1100

Hon. Brad Duguid: I can see why the Leader of the Opposition would be attracted to this anti-job opinion paper. You see, it kind of resembles his own reckless promises. We found out when we saw his party platform—it was shaped like a Tim Hortons doughnut, with a big \$10-billion hole right in the middle. There are similarities to this opinion paper, because in this opinion paper there's a \$20-billion hole in the middle, and that's the \$20 billion of investment that's pouring into this province through our clean energy economy. That's the 50,000 jobs that are pouring into Ontario, that we're creating for Ontario families.

If you really care about Ontario families, you should be standing up for the thousands of jobs that we're creating through our clean energy economy.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: The Ontario PCs are standing with ordinary hard-working families by saying no to your \$300 increase in hydro bills. Minister, surely to goodness you've got to think hydro bills are high enough as it is. We find out now through C.D. Howe that your FIT program will increase hydro bills for seniors and families by an additional \$310 per year.

Let me remind you, Minister, that this is your guy. This is Jan Carr, who you appointed to head up your Ontario Power Authority. This is your hand-picked leader who says that he's had enough of the McGuinty Liberals increasing hydro rates, wasteful programs and expensive experiments.

Minister, we say no to this \$310 tax grab. Why won't you?

Hon. Brad Duguid: One thing the Leader of the Opposition's right on is that that paper and his policy do contrast with ours, because our policy is creating thousands of jobs in the province of Ontario. Our policy is building a strong clean energy economy. Unlike his slick book, our policies are costed out. We don't have a \$10-billion hole in the middle of our policy like he has in his. He hasn't costed out how he's going to get rid of his debt retirement charge, which is part of his energy policy. He hasn't costed out how he's going to take the HST off the cost of energy. It's a \$10-billion hole. Ontario families deserve to know what you are going to cut to make up for the hole in your energy policy.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Peter Tabuns: My question is to the Minister of the Environment. According to today's report from the Environmental Commissioner, the McGuinty government is still failing to achieve its promised reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, even as the health and economic costs of floods, droughts and heat waves linked to global warming are rising. In fact, at the rate this government is going, it would take 50 years to meet its 2020 emission targets.

When will the government finally come up with a plan that actually addresses climate change in this province?

Hon. John Wilkinson: When will the NDP finally pick a lane on this issue? I have the member get up and say that we need more green energy, and then he has his colleague from Welland who says there should be a moratorium on green energy. You've got to pick a lane over there.

Here's what we know from the Environmental Commissioner: What he tells us is that already Ontario is 85% of the way to meeting our 2014 commitment. We are leading the country in what is required to reduce our greenhouse gases. We are the very first government in this province to have a comprehensive climate change adaptation strategy—all hands on deck, all ministries—led by our Premier, and we want to thank him for that leadership.

It's important for us to understand that in this House, one must pick a lane. Here in the province of Ontario, at every step we are taking steps to protect our environment for our children, and it would be very nice if the NDP could actually—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: It doesn't appear to me that the minister actually read the report this morning.

Three years ago, the Premier called climate change the “greatest challenge since the dawn of time.” Today, it is very clear that this government has lost all sense of urgency. The Environmental Commissioner’s report shows that the Premier’s climate strategy only works when we have a recession. That’s the only condition under which it works.

Has the McGuinty government backed down on climate change because it’s no longer a threat to Ontario, or because it doesn’t fit with your political priorities any more?

Hon. John Wilkinson: I challenge the member—our record over the last eight years of protecting the environment. What we have done to address the amazingly difficult global challenge of climate change—we stand on our record. It would have been nice if the party opposite were with us when we were bringing in the Clean Water Act and the Green Energy Act, protecting the boreal forest and protecting the greenbelt. Where were they? They were handmaidens to the Tories; that’s what they were doing in this House. So when it comes to making sure that we have a better future, it seems that it’s not sufficient for the member opposite—it must be inconvenient that we are already at 85% of our goal for 2014, on track to make that happen.

We will continue to work as closely as we can with all Ontarians as we address the issue of climate change and as we have an all-hands-on-deck multi-ministry approach to make sure that we’re addressing that—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

GOVERNMENT’S RECORD

Mr. Rick Johnson: My question is to the Minister of Finance. Our government’s plan to balance the budget and make the province more competitive is working and getting results. Our plan provides a solid foundation for supporting economic recovery and ensuring long-term prosperity for the province. We are focused on deficit reduction as well as protecting education and health care.

This last weekend, we heard the claim that it’s possible to balance the budget in the same time frame that our government has laid out while also cutting taxes, which will reduce revenues. I believe it’s important to be honest and realistic and not, for example, hide a \$5.5-billion deficit or present unrealistic schemes. Minister, what do you think about these numbers?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: The lack of numbers and clarity is a threat to Ontario’s future, and it represents a multi-billion-dollar hole in the numbers that they didn’t report.

Let me give you an example. They refused to acknowledge what the auditor says. The auditor says that there was a \$14.8-billion debt left over by that government on hydro. They propose, at a cost of \$350 million, to leave that debt on the books, which is a mistake. And what they didn’t do was account for that \$350 million in their costing. That is one of a number of examples that we will

be pointing out in the next several days and weeks. Ontarians need to know those numbers because what it amounts to—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Rick Johnson: Our government has gone through an extensive process to look at government programs and spending. We continue to take action to manage expenses, increase productivity and improve service delivery. Initiatives announced in the 2011 budget and since December 2010 will help realize additional savings of nearly \$1.5 billion across government over the next three fiscal years. We’re well on our way to reducing the OPS by 5%, which we announced in 2009, as well as an additional 1,500 positions announced in the 2011 budget, for savings of close to \$500 million. We merged Infrastructure Ontario with the Ontario Realty Corp., which will save \$15 million over three years. We also looked at some smaller things which add up to some pretty big numbers, like eliminating more than 15,000 printers and computers, saving \$8 million. How do these savings compare to the promises we heard on the week-end?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: The PC slick book simply cannot square the round hole. There is a multi-billion-dollar gap, and that’s because they haven’t been candid with Ontarians in terms of what it is they choose to do. They have not laid out what they’re going to do in terms of health care and education. They have promised all kinds of things here and there, and if you look closely at the numbers, there’s a multi-billion-dollar hole which we’ll be talking more about.

The debt retirement charge is a good example of that. They failed to account for the \$350-million-per-year hit that has on Ontario’s interest costs because they want to let the debt just continue to accumulate interest instead of doing the right thing and eliminating the debt which they created.

We have a plan. It’s costed by the auditor. It’s the right plan for a brighter future for all Ontarians.

ENERGY POLICIES

Mr. John Yakabuski: My question is for the Minister of Energy. This morning, the esteemed C.D. Howe Institute has endorsed what the PC Party—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Welcome to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. I would ask that you withdraw the comment that you just made.

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: I withdraw, Speaker.

Mr. John Yakabuski: This morning, the esteemed C.D. Howe Institute endorsed what the PC Party has been saying all along: that your expensive energy experiments are the wrong way to go. The PC Party has been saying from the start that the feed-in tariff program was reckless and unsustainable. You insulted the intelligence of Ontario families by claiming that it would only increase their hydro bills by 1% per year. The C.D. Howe Institute

says it will increase them by \$310 per year per household.

1110

Our Changebook shows respect for Ontario families by showing that we will offer them relief. We will stop signing those expensive subsidies and the Premier's expensive energy experiments. Minister, why won't you?

Hon. Brad Duguid: I'm glad that the members opposite laid out their reckless plan for energy, and it does contrast with our plan. Our plan is to build a clean, reliable and modern energy system; theirs is to tear it down. Our plan is to replace dirty coal with cleaner sources of power; they don't want to go there. Our plan is to build a global-leading clean energy economy, putting thousands of Ontarians back to work; their plan is to put those Ontario families back out of work.

We're going to stand up for those Ontario families. We're going to stand up for cleaner air. We're going to stand up for building a global-leading clean energy economy, and we will be happy in the fall to contrast our plan with their lack of a plan any day.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. John Yakabuski: Minister, when you introduced your reckless Green Energy Act, you swore up and down that it would increase hydro bills by only 1% per year. The C.D. Howe Institute has now revealed the truth: Your unsustainable FIT program will raise hydro bills by \$310 per household per year. That's \$1.5 billion more on the backs of Ontario families and seniors, and Minister, this does not include the cost of your sweetheart Samsung deal. Jobs created by your subsidy will be at a rate of at least \$180,000 per job per year. The co-author of that report: Jan Carr.

Minister, you tell me: Are Jan Carr and the C.D. Howe Institute wrong, or have you just been lying all along?

Interjections.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Withdraw.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The honourable member did withdraw.

Minister?

Hon. Brad Duguid: All they're about is irresponsible rhetoric. They want to move forward with a reckless plan that will destroy our clean energy economy, and it will have a very significant effect on everyday Ontarians.

Let me share with you what Ben Roelands has to say, because he's a real, everyday Ontarian that your plan is completely ignoring. He said this: "I immigrated to Canada without a prospect of a secure job. Thanks to the Ontario FIT program, I not only found employment, I managed to find a dream job working side by side with some of the most creative minds in a burgeoning industry. Every day I improve the future of"—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The honourable member from Renfrew understands the standing orders, and he just—

Mr. Mike Colle: And he gets warned a thousand times a day. How many times does he have to be warned?

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I can quickly warn the member from Eglinton—Lawrence, because you've got guilty members within your own party as well. But I would just say to the honourable member from Renfrew that you did ask a question. You should be listening to the response. If you're not satisfied with the response, utilize the standing orders and call for a late show.

Minister?

Hon. Brad Duguid: They can heckle me all they want, but when they heckle when I'm telling them exactly what Ontario workers are saying about their policy to put them out of work, they should show more respect for Ontario workers than that.

We care about Ontario workers. We care about putting Ontarians back to work. We're turning the corner with our economy. You want to tear it all down. We're about building it back up again. Ontarians are about building, not tearing things down. We're standing up—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

CAREGIVERS

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est pour la ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée, but before I start I'd like to welcome the hard-working student from Attawapiskat who just walked into the east gallery. Welcome.

One in five Ontarians is a caregiver to a loved one or a family member. Those informal caregivers are largely unseen, yet they provide about 70% of the caregiving in our province. Our informal caregivers are tired and they are hurting. Community groups, advocates and caregivers themselves have done a lot of work since the release, in 2009, of the long-range scenario report. Can the minister tell this House when she will release the report on caregivers?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I'd like to thank the member for the question and to echo her assertion that we owe so much to the caregivers in this province, the people who put their own lives on hold so they can care for a spouse or for a child or for a parent or another family member, or even a neighbour or friend.

Caregivers are a vitally important part of our health care system, and I'm very pleased that our local health integration networks, in their work through our aging at home strategy, is actually moving to provide better support for caregivers. This includes respite, it includes home care—a variety of approaches to help support caregivers.

Is there more to do? Absolutely, there is more to do. And as we move forward with our aging population, our focus on caregivers must only increase.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

M^{me} France Gélinas: We all agree that informal caregivers contribute billions to our health care system annually, yet we offer them virtually no support in this work. Instead, these caregivers are forced to sacrifice their own careers, sacrifice advancement and often, their personal lives.

A number of charitable organizations have formed the Ontario Caregiver Coalition to advance the interests of caregivers in the workplace and to advance the implementation of a comprehensive caregiver strategy. Yet today, all of their good work, all of their good ideas are being held from the public. Will the minister agree to release the work that has been done, the report, so that caregivers and their loved ones can finally have a complete strategy and get the support they need?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Let me repeat that our focus on helping people stay in their homes as long as possible, delaying or even preventing them from moving into long-term care, is a fundamental foundation of our aging at home strategy, and we are seeing wonderful success as a result of the investments we are making to support people at home.

I acknowledge that there is more to do. I know that as our population ages, caregivers will play an increasingly important role, and I can assure you that we on this side of the House are there to support caregivers.

SMALL BUSINESS

Mr. David Zimmer: My question is for the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. In January of this year, the federal government recognized 2011 as the Year of the Entrepreneur, highlighting the essential role that small and medium businesses play in securing Canada's ongoing economic recovery. Ontario has long been known for its innovative entrepreneurs, business icons like Tim Horton; Jim Balsillie and Mike Lazaridis at RIM; Eddie Sonshine at RioCan properties; and many others. They all got their early start here in Ontario and grew into major enterprises.

Minister, how are today's small and medium-sized businesses helping Ontario's economic success? How is Ontario helping those businesses succeed?

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: I am delighted by this question. Hopefully the whole House will join us as we welcome the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, who are here today, as well as the Canadian Youth Business Foundation, the Canadian youth future business people. They've joined us here in the House today and we welcome you here today.

I'm delighted to see that especially now that the opposition has elected to actually table what they call their platform—nary a mention of business in the future for business in Ontario. Contrast that slippery book that they tabled to what we have done over the course of eight years: that is, build the foundation for business in Ontario, starting with our tax policy, which now sounds eerily like what they want to table as a potential platform. They voted against our business initiatives, and now they—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. David Zimmer: Minister, it's evident that our government has established a strong infrastructure to assist and support Ontario's young entrepreneurs and

those businesses that are already on their way up. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business releases a monthly Business Barometer report. The last one, on May 4, 2011, covered the survey for the results of the month of April. Minister, what does the report suggest about small business confidence in this economy? Is our government living up to the expectations of Ontario's small and medium-sized businesses?

1120

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: Again, it's important to suggest that just in the last few years, we've eliminated \$4.5 billion in taxes attacking small business—gone—the same \$4.5 billion in small tax relief opposed by the opposition party, opposed by them; and to note that they would have an opportunity to table a platform where they don't mention business, they don't mention building new jobs in our economy, just as we're coming out of our fragile recovery. They choose to ignore it in their book.

Instead, we have eight years of solid evidence of creating a climate for investment. In fact, even the FDI, which ranks Ontario against all jurisdictions, tied number one for the greatest level of investment where? In Ontario. That's where businesses can—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

ENERGY POLICIES

Mr. Peter Shurman: My question is also to the Minister of Economic Development. This morning, Jan Carr, the Premier's hand-picked choice to start up the Ontario Power Authority, released a report that endorses the change Ontario PCs are calling for in Changebook. He found: "Ontario's policies do not provide cost-effective approaches to meeting the government's goals of creating jobs...." He estimates the subsidies you hand out to be \$179,000 per job per year. That is \$179,000 per job per year for 20 years.

What do you say to Ontario families who don't earn anything close to that, who are just trying to pay their hydro bills? Who taught you math?

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: I'm delighted to finally have a question from a critic for economic development and trade, because they don't want to talk about job creation. They don't want to talk about what they now are going to have to go to their public with, which is nary a mention of job creation in their supposed platform.

But we have eight years of solid evidence. Why has this member, who just came back from the Brampton Chrysler assembly plant—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Honourable members, the member from Halton made a comment that he can't hear the answer. If he can't hear and he's sitting just to my left, I'm having difficulty. Your honourable member is asking a question, and you're not even giving him a chance to listen the answer.

Minister.

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: We just came back, the Premier and I, along with the member opposite, from the Chrysler assembly plant, where Chrysler-Fiat just returned all of their loan repayable back to our government, and they did it early—six years early. Moreover, we met with the CAW representatives of the folks on the front line, with those great jobs that we had a hand in saving, along with the CAW. I ask the member opposite—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Shurman: Speaker, an opportunity where the—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Renfrew, your own member is up asking the supplementary and you're shouting him down.

Please continue.

Mr. Peter Shurman: I loved being at Chrysler too, as the minister has mentioned. It was interesting to see the Premier use the entire opportunity for partisan politics.

Carr's report—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock. Minister of Agriculture, please come to order. I can help facilitate an early—she can get right to the front of the line of the wonderful beef barbecue today.

Please continue.

Mr. Peter Shurman: Carr's report validates what Ontario PCs have said all along: Families are paying too much. Your policy is not creating jobs; it is killing jobs. He points out that most of the jobs you are paying \$179,000 a year for 20 years to create are construction jobs that would have been created anyway, and he says that your numbers are not honest about how many jobs will be lost because your energy experiments are driving up business costs.

You have already killed 300,000 jobs. How many more Ontario families will be out of work because of the subsidies you are handing out for the Premier's energy experiments?

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: I think the 9,000 jobs that were saved at Chrysler are important jobs, and we support those jobs. We're sorry that you called it corporate welfare. We support the auto sector and all of the 400,000 families that have a job because we stepped in.

I think it's important that we be honest with the public, that when we rank number one in investment in North America, half of those investment projects that landed in Ontario—half of them—are in high-energy industries. They're in advanced manufacturing, and they are in IT; of the 127 new projects in 2010, half of them.

I appreciate that you want to talk about energy prices, but we're going to go forward with the truth. We're going to go forward with the facts. We're going to tell people that this is the party of job creation, and you are the party that—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Premier. This morning, more than 75 OPSEU correctional workers and other community advocates are here from Owen Sound and Walkerton to speak out against the McGuinty government's hurried and short-sighted decision to close jails in Walkerton, in Owen Sound and in Sarnia. The evidence that OPSEU correctional workers, local mayors and community members have presented to keep these jails open is absolutely overwhelming, but so far, the government has refused to listen.

Can the Premier tell our visitors today that it will be a different day?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Correctional Services.

Hon. James J. Bradley: These matters are always very difficult to deal with. As the member knows, the Ontario government is dealing with a substantial deficit that has to be addressed. Each of the ministries had to look at potential ways to save money.

Two of the jails that you've mentioned were built back in the 1800s. We're trying to modernize the system. We're trying to effect some efficiencies. I have received information from the Ministry of Correctional Services on how that might be done. It's never easy, and it's never going to be easy to do so. But the conclusion they have come to is that we will have to decommission some of these jails in order to save money for the province of Ontario, as difficult a decision as that always is, particularly for those who are directly affected by it.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: These closures are going to hurt more than 200 correctional workers and their families, hinder the rehabilitation of inmates and deal a devastating economic blow to the communities of Sarnia and the Grey-Bruce regions. Even more confusing, the savings that government is theorizing don't even hold any water. More than 12,000 Ontarians see the mistake this government is making and have signed petitions. All they ask for is for the government to hold off on the jail closures until real public consultations are held. It's not a lot to ask.

Will the Premier and the minister listen to these Ontarians and grant this very, very reasonable request for some kind of consultation period before they recklessly go ahead with this move?

Hon. James J. Bradley: First of all, I want to recommend a book to the leader of the third party. It's called *Minding the Public Purse*, by former NDP finance minister in Saskatchewan Dr. Janice MacKinnon. During that period of time the New Democratic Party, while in power, had to close 52 rural hospitals in the province of Saskatchewan, with jobs lost and with great difficulty for those communities. The government didn't do it because they wanted to be mean. The government didn't do it because they were callous at that time. The government had to look at ways to efficiently deliver services. That's what this government is doing.

I have met with municipal representatives from the communities you have mentioned. I have met with provincial representatives of OPSEU. I have asked to be able to meet with representatives of this organization today so—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Jeff Leal: My question this morning is to my colleague the Minister of Education. Minister, we all know how important education is for our students and parents to help build a better province. We've made great progress over the past eight years, particularly in the riding of Peterborough.

Minister, education spending has increased by 46%. My constituents in Peterborough want to know, how has this investment been delivered?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: Well, it is indeed an excellent question because those of us on this side of the House recognize that investing in education is one of the single most important things that we can do for our future, for our children's future and for the future of our economy. That is why we have made investments so that test scores have improved. We have made investments so that we have more students graduating in our schools now. When we came to government about one in three students were not graduating from our secondary schools. Now more than 80% of our students are.

1130

We have increased public confidence in our education system. We have peace in our schools. Families know, they are confident, that when they send their children to school the teachers will be there to teach them and that they will be getting a good education. So, yes, we have made significant increases in our investment, but we have a very good story to tell—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Jeff Leal: Thank you very much, Minister. My constituents will be pleased to know that this government is going to continue to build on the success we've worked so hard to achieve.

Minister, the opposition recently put out a collection of Timbits on how they want to govern this province. My constituents want to know what our plan is. What is the government doing to ensure that Ontario students are getting the advantages they need to compete in the economy of tomorrow and take our students to the next level?

Interjections.

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: The members of the opposition laugh at this, but this is really very serious. Families in Ontario do want to know what our plan for the future is, and we are absolutely committed to full-day kindergarten.

On the other side of the House, they put out a plan—I think they called it an “education” plan, but it was really

their education plan. Their plan would claim that they will support full-day kindergarten, but I would just remind the people of Ontario that they voted against full-day kindergarten. I would also say to the people of Ontario that if you look at what they call their plan, there's no money for capital, and we know that full-day kindergarten will not happen without a commitment to building new classroom spaces. Our government has made that commitment. We will build the spaces. There's no capital money in their plan, so full-day kindergarten is just a broken promise on that side of the House.

CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Mr. Robert Bailey: My question is to the Minister of Safety and Correctional Services. Minister, you've been withholding information at every turn. You refuse—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd just ask the honourable member to withdraw that comment, please.

Mr. Robert Bailey: I withdraw.

Minister, you've been neglecting to answer my questions at every turn. You refuse to provide the families of Walkerton and Sarnia with the facts they need about their jail closure, and you've yet to provide the Sarnia delegates with the cost-benefit analysis behind the jail closure decision.

Minister, while you and your colleagues across the way are busy providing luxuries for convicted prisoners and building mega-prisons in the finance minister's riding, we in the PC caucus are committed to making prisoners repay their debt to society. Minister, are you intentionally withholding information from the families—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): For the second time, withdraw the comment, please.

Mr. Robert Bailey: I withdraw.

Minister, are you intentionally withholding information—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): No. And if you do it again, I'm going to have to name you.

Minister?

Hon. James J. Bradley: We know that these are very difficult times for all of the people in the province of Ontario. I know that when the Conservative government was in power and they closed jails in Cobourg, Haileybury, L'Orignal, Waterloo, Wellington, Parry Sound, Barrie, Peterborough, Guelph, Cornwall, the Burtch Facility, Lindsay, Whitby, Brampton, Millbrook and Sault Ste. Marie, the government of the day looked very carefully, made an evaluation and took into consideration all factors, as this government is, and ultimately had to make some very difficult decisions.

Half of the time, you people are up demanding we save money. As soon as we come forward with a method to save money, you don't want us to save money. We have to know where you stand on these issues.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary? The member for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound.

Mr. Bill Murdoch: My question is the same minister. We don't need the same answer, that's for sure; we've heard that answer too many times already.

That's a long time ago. You are the government now. You represent the province, and you're closing our jails. The last person who tried to do this dumb idea—can I use that, “dumb idea”?—we asked him to resign. He didn't resign, but now he's a senator, so maybe the minister ought to look at something like that. But he didn't close the jail, either. He never closed the jail.

To the minister: Some—

Interjections.

Mr. Bill Murdoch: Well, I've got to get a question if I can hear myself.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): That's why I stopped the clock.

Mr. John Yakabuski: There's so much noise over there, I can't hear his question. This may be Bill's last question.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I can't believe you can say that with a straight face.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Minister of Consumer Services.

We have 123 minutes and 56 seconds till the final question. Get right to the question, please.

Mr. Bill Murdoch: I know the minister doesn't want to resign, so the question would be, six weeks ago we met with you and that big small guy and he told us right at that meeting that he would have the figures for us as to why this was a good idea, to save \$3 million here and spend \$5 million here—Liberal economics, as you'd say. Where is that information? Six weeks ago—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Minister?

Hon. James J. Bradley: I do have some quotes from now-Senator Runciman that talked about these difficult decisions that had to be made. He indicated there was a need for the modernization of the system. My friend from Waterloo-Wellington—I'm not going to use his quotes on him today, because he's a good friend of mine. I don't want to do that.

These are very difficult decisions. We gather the information within the ministry; they provide that information. When you're talking about dumb ideas, the dumbest idea I've heard of—over on this side we want to put more police on the streets, so we have 2,300. You want to put more prisoners in parks and schoolyards and neighbourhoods and business areas. We're putting more police on the streets, and you want to put more prisoners in neighbourhoods around the province of Ontario. I don't think that's a very good idea. Besides, it's extremely—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. A new question from the member from Timmins-James Bay.

SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS

FRENCH-LANGUAGE SERVICES

M. Gilles Bisson: Ma question est pour la ministre de la Santé. Madame la Ministre, l'alliance de Timmins, autrement connue comme l'ACFO, pour des années, oeuvre pour être capable d'avoir un centre communautaire francophone à Timmins. Ils ont contacté, dans le passé, le ministre Smitherman, qui avait donné une chance que, possiblement, c'était pour être financé. Depuis que vous êtes devenue ministre, l'alliance demande encore, à beaucoup de reprises, le financement pour commencer ce centre. Il n'y a rien qui arrive de votre ministère ou de votre gouvernement. Justement, ils vous demandent des rencontres. Ça fait depuis le mois d'octobre de l'année passée que l'alliance et mon bureau vous demandent des réunions pour s'asseoir avec l'alliance et parler d'un centre communautaire francophone.

À quel point aurez-vous l'intention de, premièrement, financer de nouveaux centres de santé communautaire francophones, et quand est-ce que vous allez rencontrer l'alliance de Timmins?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Merci pour la question. What I can tell you is that we are absolutely committed to improving health services for people who speak French. I was very pleased that the French language commissioner has actually reviewed what we are doing and is supportive of what we are doing.

When it comes to family health teams, in our last wave we introduced 30 new family health teams, and 17 of those 30 will provide services in French.

The other important initiative that we have moved forward with is the establishment of the entities that will be working with the LHINs to ensure that francophone services are provided in health.

We're moving in the right direction. We're not as far as we want to be, but we are absolutely moving in that direction.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

M. Gilles Bisson: Madame la Ministre, la question est très simple : à quel point allez-vous rencontrer l'alliance de Timmins pour discuter du dossier du centre communautaire francophone à Timmins? À quel point peut-on avoir cette rencontre? Oui ou non?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I am pleased to say that I spend a significant amount of my time meeting with people, visiting community health centres and meeting people on the ground where they are. I fill my day with conversations with people advocating for ways to improve. I'm more than pleased to continue to meet with people as they request that.

SOUTH ASIAN COMMUNITY

Hon. Margaret R. Best: Point of order, Mr. Speaker: On this, the last day of South Asian Heritage Month in Ontario, and in honour of my maternal grandmother, who was born in Mumbai, India, I take this opportunity to

thank the South Asian community for infusing the Ontario mosaic with their rich culture and rich heritage.

DEFERRED VOTES

FIRE PROTECTION AND PREVENTION AMENDMENT ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA PRÉVENTION ET LA PROTECTION CONTRE L'INCENDIE

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of Bill 181, An Act to amend the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997 / Projet de loi 181, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur la prévention et la protection contre l'incendie.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1141 to 1146.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Members please take their seats.

On May 30, Mr. Sousa moved third reading of Bill 181. All those in favour will rise one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

Ayes

Aggelonitis, Sophia	Elliott, Christine	Mitchell, Carol
Albanese, Laura	Gerretsen, John	Moridi, Reza
Arnott, Ted	Gravelle, Michael	Munro, Julia
Bailey, Robert	Hampton, Howard	Murdoch, Bill
Bartolucci, Rick	Hardeman, Ernie	Murray, Glen R.
Bentley, Christopher	Hillier, Randy	Naqvi, Yasir
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Horwath, Andrea	Oraziotti, David
Best, Margaret	Hoskins, Eric	Pendergast, Leeanna
Bisson, Gilles	Hoy, Pat	Phillips, Gerry
Bradley, James J.	Hudak, Tim	Prue, Michael
Broten, Laurel C.	Jaczek, Helena	Pupatello, Sandra
Brown, Michael A.	Jeffrey, Linda	Qaadri, Shafiq
Brownell, Jim	Johnson, Rick	Ramal, Khalil
Cansfield, Donna H.	Klees, Frank	Rinaldi, Lou
Caplan, David	Kormos, Peter	Ruprecht, Tony
Carroll, Aileen	Kular, Kuldip	Sandals, Liz
Chiarelli, Bob	Kwinter, Monte	Sergio, Mario
Chudleigh, Ted	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Smith, Monique
Clark, Steve	Leal, Jeff	Sorbara, Greg
Colle, Mike	Levac, Dave	Sousa, Charles
Craiton, Kim	Marchese, Rosario	Sterling, Norman W.
Crozier, Bruce	Martiniuk, Gerry	Tabuns, Peter
Delaney, Bob	Matthews, Deborah	Takhar, Harinder S.
Dhillon, Vic	Mauro, Bill	Van Bommel, Maria
Dickson, Joe	McMeekin, Ted	Wilkinson, John
Dombrowsky, Leona	McNeely, Phil	Wilson, Jim
Duguid, Brad	Meilleur, Madeleine	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Duncan, Dwight	Miller, Paul	Yakubski, John
Dunlop, Garfield	Milloy, John	Zimmer, David

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Those opposed?

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 87; the nays are 0.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

M^{me} France Gélinas: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I just wanted to be on the record that the Integrity Commissioner advised me that I was in a pecuniary conflict of interest, and I was to abstain from the vote on Bill 181.

McMICHAEL CANADIAN ART COLLECTION AMENDMENT ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA COLLECTION McMICHAEL D'ART CANADIEN

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of Bill 188, An Act to amend the McMichael Canadian Art Collection Act / Projet de loi 188, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Collection McMichael d'art canadien.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

Interjections: Same vote.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Agreed? I heard a no.

The division bells rang from 1150 to 1151.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Ms. Smith has moved third reading of Bill 181. All those in favour will rise one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

Ayes

Aggelonitis, Sophia	Elliott, Christine	Milloy, John
Albanese, Laura	Gerretsen, John	Mitchell, Carol
Arnott, Ted	Gélinas, France	Moridi, Reza
Bailey, Robert	Gravelle, Michael	Munro, Julia
Bartolucci, Rick	Hampton, Howard	Murdoch, Bill
Bentley, Christopher	Hardeman, Ernie	Murray, Glen R.
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hillier, Randy	Naqvi, Yasir
Best, Margaret	Horwath, Andrea	Oraziotti, David
Bisson, Gilles	Hoskins, Eric	Pendergast, Leeanna
Bradley, James J.	Hoy, Pat	Phillips, Gerry
Broten, Laurel C.	Hudak, Tim	Prue, Michael
Brown, Michael A.	Jaczek, Helena	Pupatello, Sandra
Brownell, Jim	Jeffrey, Linda	Qaadri, Shafiq
Cansfield, Donna H.	Johnson, Rick	Ramal, Khalil
Caplan, David	Klees, Frank	Rinaldi, Lou
Carroll, Aileen	Kormos, Peter	Ruprecht, Tony
Chiarelli, Bob	Kular, Kuldip	Sandals, Liz
Chudleigh, Ted	Kwinter, Monte	Sergio, Mario
Clark, Steve	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Smith, Monique
Colle, Mike	Leal, Jeff	Sorbara, Greg
Craiton, Kim	Levac, Dave	Sousa, Charles
Crozier, Bruce	Marchese, Rosario	Tabuns, Peter
Delaney, Bob	Martiniuk, Gerry	Takhar, Harinder S.
Dhillon, Vic	Matthews, Deborah	Van Bommel, Maria
Dickson, Joe	Mauro, Bill	Wilkinson, John
Dombrowsky, Leona	McMeekin, Ted	Wilson, Jim
Duguid, Brad	McNeely, Phil	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Duncan, Dwight	Meilleur, Madeleine	Yakubski, John
Dunlop, Garfield	Miller, Paul	Zimmer, David

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Those opposed?

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 87; the nays are 0.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd like to take this opportunity to remind the members of the Ontario Cattlemen's Association barbecue happening on the front lawn following question period. In order to ensure that you get to your afternoon meetings on time, the cattlemen have graciously opened an MPPs' line so that you may meet, greet and eat with them. And on behalf of the House collectively, if anybody complains, I will take the shot for you.

This House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.
The House recessed from 1154 to 1500.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): We have with us in the Speaker's gallery today, here for the tribute to former member Bob Mackenzie, son Andrew Mackenzie and his partner, Adrienne Pires; son Dan Mackenzie and his partner, Jill Marzetti; son David Mackenzie and his partner, Elizabeth Shilton; daughter Lori Mackenzie and her partner, Bob Huget, who was also the member for Sarnia in the 35th Parliament; daughter Kim Wark and her partner, John Wark; granddaughters Susannah Huget, Christina Mackenzie and Lily Mackenzie; and grandson Robert Mackenzie.

Also joining us in the Speaker's gallery: David Christopherson, current federal member for Hamilton Centre and former member for Hamilton Centre, then Hamilton West, in the 35th, 36th and 37th Parliaments; Dave Cooke, member for Windsor-Riverside in the 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 34th, 35th and 36th Parliaments; Odoardo Di Santo, MPP for Downsview in the 30th, 31st and 32nd Parliaments; Dr. Bob Frankford, member for Scarborough East in the 35th Parliament; Floyd Laughren, member for Nickel Belt in the 29th, 30th, 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 34th, 35th and 36th Parliaments; Gary Malkowski, member for York East in the 35th Parliament; Tony Martin, member for Sault Ste. Marie in the 35th, 36th and 37th Parliaments; Ross McClellan, member for Bellwoods in the 30th, 31st, 32nd and 33rd Parliaments; Larry O'Connor, member for Durham-York in the 35th Parliament; Allan Pilkey, member for Oshawa in the 35th Parliament; David Reville, member for Riverdale in the 33rd and 34th Parliaments; Tony Silipo, member for Dovercourt in the 35th and 36th Parliaments; David Warner, former Speaker and member for Scarborough-Ellesmere in the 30th, 31st, 33rd and 35th Parliaments; and Bud Wildman, member for Algoma in the 30th, 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 34th, 35th and 36th Parliaments.

Also today, friends of the family: Clare Booker, Don Cottrell, Kimberly Ehler, Mary Morison, Brendan Morgan, Jay Mowat, Bill Reno, Rachel Spence, Helen Breslauer, Bruce Cox, Laura Henry, Harry Hynd, Michael Lewis, Sean Power, Sid Ryan, Bonaventure Saptel, Elizabeth Smith-Van Beek and John Van Beek.

To the former members, welcome back to the Legislature today.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

ONTARIO CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: On behalf of Tim Hudak and the PC caucus, I'm pleased to rise today to welcome the Ontario Cattlemen's Association back to Queen's Park and thank them for providing MPPs with a great lunch of Ontario corn-fed beef.

Ontario cattle farmers make a significant contribution to our province. There are over 19,000 beef farmers in Ontario, and they are a significant part of our agriculture and provincial economy.

We have been pleased to work with the Ontario cattlemen and other non-supply-managed commodity groups and farmers across Ontario over the past few years on a business risk management program. Ontario beef farmers suffered through years of declining margins and high input costs. That is why Changebook, our PC policy released last weekend, continues our strong commitment to a risk management program.

We also announced policies to address other concerns, such as creating one window for farmers to access government to reduce duplication and wasted time. And a buy-Ontario food policy: We will lead by example at provincial institutions such as hospitals and schools.

We also announced steps to stop the spiralling cost of hydro, such as eliminating costly energy bureaucracy, stopping expensive energy experiments and making smart meters optional.

We understand the importance of agriculture in Ontario and the importance of having a government that truly supports agriculture.

Again, I want to thank the Ontario Cattlemen's Association for coming to Queen's Park and for meeting with the PC caucus this morning to share their concerns. We have been pleased to work with them on these important issues, and we look forward to working with them in the future.

PLANNED PARENTHOOD TORONTO

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Today, I want to honour an organization that is making a significant contribution to my community and to the city of Toronto. Planned Parenthood Toronto celebrates its 50th anniversary this year as a community-based agency dedicated to the vision of a future of sexual and reproductive choice, freedom and possibilities.

Located in my riding of Trinity-Spadina, Planned Parenthood Toronto operates a fully accredited community health centre, providing primary health care services to youth aged 13 to 29 from across the city of Toronto and beyond. They also provide health promotion programming, education, training and research to improve the sexual and reproductive health of youth and women. Planned Parenthood Toronto's non-judgmental services

are accessible and inclusive, and they serve marginalized youth and women, who traditionally face barriers to accessing care, and I was happy to have witnessed this when I did a tour of Planned Parenthood Toronto last Friday.

It's a momentous occasion for any non-profit agency to commemorate their 50th anniversary. I wish Planned Parenthood Toronto all the best in celebrating their 50 years of accomplishments and in looking toward a bright future as they continue to change the lives of youth and women.

LIQUOR CONTROL

Mr. Rick Johnson: Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock is home to countless summer festivals and events that bring our communities together. Every year across Ontario, festivals and events like those in my riding contribute more than \$22 billion to the provincial economy. They also directly generate more than 22,000 jobs and support another 300,000 direct and indirect jobs. So I'm very pleased that we're helping make festivals and events even more successful by updating and modernizing Ontario's liquor laws.

We want to make sure that everyone is drinking safely and responsibly. We've implemented mandatory server training for licensed establishments, escalated penalties to discourage repeat drunk drivers, and enacted a zero blood-alcohol tolerance for drivers under 21. We've also broadened the licensed areas to include washrooms and hallways so people don't have to leave their drinks unattended.

As of tomorrow, festival- and event-goers will be free to walk with their drinks within a defined area, enjoying the event with their families and circulating in retail areas. Alcohol service will be extended to 2 a.m. at special events, such as weddings and charity fundraisers. And the sale of all-inclusive vacation packages in Ontario will help improve tourism and support jobs for my residents in Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock.

The modernization of Ontario's liquor laws means we're ensuring that alcoholic beverages are served in a responsible manner, while giving a boost to local festivals and events like Fiesta Buckhorn, the Bobcaygeon Wine and Food Festival and the Buckhorn Fine Art Festival, and that is something we can raise a glass to.

SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Norm Miller: I rise today to highlight again how the McGuinty government is driving business out of this province.

I received a letter from Barry Bell, president of Bell Transportation, which outlines all too well the predicament he and other independent bus operators are facing. He writes: "The RFP process is an unmitigated dark cloud that has followed myself and other operators for a few years now. Big fish swallow the little fish or kick them out of the pond entirely, and when there are no

more little guys (read competition), rates for service will skyrocket.

"As an owner, I take home less than \$29,000 a year ... I have not had a raise in over six years.

"But it is the family business since 1952.

"I have a hard time coming to grips with the business being more or less ripped from my grasp by the RFP process. I can not do this job for less. I can not absorb a pay cut to starve my competitors. I am a sitting duck.

"For the past three years, I forgo paying myself what I'm worth, and yet I still show up for work at 5 a.m. in the winter to determine if it's safe to go on any given day. I sacrifice family vacation time because I feel the boss should be on hand when the business is running. I spend an outrageous amount each month for payments on our buses, to propagate our four-year bus renewal program. We have never had a work stoppage or strike. We have never been duplicitous in our billing to the board, and we've been doing it for almost 60 years."

Sadly, that's the kind of treatment that small business operators face in McGuinty's Ontario.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Mr. Kuldip Kular: I am proud to share with my colleagues news of the latest green energy projects in Bramalea-Gore-Malton. When completed, these 18 solar projects will produce 3,000 kilowatts of renewable energy for the homes and businesses of my riding. These projects will be installed by not just a handful of companies, but by 10 different companies indicating that the market for clean energy in Ontario is vibrant. This is more proof of our government's success in making Ontario a North American leader in the clean energy sector through our Green Energy Act and feed-in tariff program.

Government should always have an eye to the future, and green energy projects demonstrate our vision for a cleaner, healthier and prosperous future.

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The feed-in tariff program allows Ontarians to help transform our society. Through it, they can reduce the impact of their homes and workplaces on the environment, help clean Ontario's air and gain a return on their investment by sharing the extra energy they produce in Ontario's grid.

I can't help but note the contrast in our vision with that of the official opposition. Instead of embracing this technology and its many benefits for Ontarians, they would throw away the great work that is under way by researchers, developers and investors, many of whom call Ontario home.

HOCKEY

Mr. Bill Murdoch: Our national sport of hockey has become plagued with career-ending, life-threatening hits to the head. Earlier this season, we saw star NHL players like Sidney Crosby and Marc Savard sidelined for

months because of vicious head shots that left them unconscious. There is no doubt that physical play is a key feature of the game, but there is no excuse for allowing dirty players to get away with vicious, illegal hits to the head.

Recently, players from the Owen Sound Attack became victims of vicious attacks at the Memorial Cup. These illegal hits went unpunished by the referees. Canada is known around the world for producing the best players the sport has to offer, but the future of our young stars is in jeopardy. Junior hockey officials in Canada, namely OHL commissioner David Branch and the Memorial Cup's discipline chair, Brian O'Neill, are failing to protect Ontario's most talented players.

Despite incompetent and corrupt officiating, the Attack not only clinched its first OHL championship but captured some of the game's highest honours. Andrew Shaw was awarded the Ed Chynoweth Trophy by NHL central scouting for being the Memorial Cup's top scorer, and Jordan Binnington was awarded the Hap Emms Memorial Trophy for outstanding goaltender.

The future of Canada's games and its young stars is in danger from poor officiating and out-of-touch OHL management that fails to consider the future of the game and the safety of its players. If there is any honour left in the officials of the 2011 Memorial Cup and the OHL commissioner, David Branch, they should resign for failing to protect one of Canada's most precious assets: our talented young hockey players.

REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

Mr. Monte Kwinter: I rise today to honour the people of the Republic of Azerbaijan, who celebrated their Republic Day on May 28. Republic Day commemorates the day Azerbaijan first declared independence from the Russian Empire in 1918, becoming the first-ever Muslim democratic republic and granting suffrage to women ahead of many western countries.

The Azerbaijan independence was short-lived and succumbed to Soviet power in 1920. However, the people of this country were able to regain their freedom in 1991. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the independence of modern and secular Azerbaijan.

Despite ongoing challenges, in recent years Azerbaijan made remarkable progress, particularly in boosting the economy and reducing poverty. Though a lot of work is still ahead, Azerbaijan's achievement was acknowledged by international institutions such as the World Bank and the World Economic Forum. Azerbaijan is promoting important trans-regional projects, first of all in oil and gas by delivering hydrocarbon resources from the Caspian Sea to global markets via a network of pipelines.

Azerbaijan is building, along with partners, a Europe-Caucasia-Asia transport corridor: the so-called modern Silk Road. Azerbaijan has also assumed an important role in the fight against terrorism. Today, Azerbaijani peacekeepers serve shoulder to shoulder with Canadian and other forces in Afghanistan.

I'd ask all of my colleagues to join me and the Azerbaijani community in Canada to congratulate the people of Azerbaijan on the 20th anniversary of their modern Republic Day and to renew our commitment to further develop and strengthen the bonds between our two peoples.

ONTARIO YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

Mr. Dave Levac: I rise to share with the House an amazing experience I was invited to last week. To actually participate in an OYAP program event was eye-opening and absolutely tasty. The OYAP demonstration dinner held Thursday, May 26, at St. John's College high school in Brantford was a celebration of a unique, first-time-in-Canada culinary course for high school students.

The students were magnificent. They were highly motivated, professional in look, really did a great job on the cooking and interacted great with the guests. The invitees were Mr. Kai Bein, the head chef at the Brantford Golf and Country Club; Sharon Estok from Mohawk College; Scott Brunton from the MTCU; Jill Halyk from GETAB; His Worship Mayor Chris Friel; Cheryl Gregory, MTCU training consultant; John Murnaghan from the Brant News; Dante Dalia, the co-op and OYAP coordinator for the Catholic school board; and, of course, myself.

Thirteen sample courses were served. The dishes were prepared, cooked, served and described by the students. This project was the brainchild of Dante Dalia and forged by the partnership of the school board, St. John's College, Assumption College, Mohawk College and MTCU.

The students, when the course is completed, will end up with a level one cook certification, one college credit and three high school credits. Their teacher, Tom Mercante, the foods teacher at Assumption and a certified chef, designed and taught the course.

These are the chefs of tomorrow, and I mean tomorrow, being Wednesday. Congratulations to each and every one of those students.

ONTARIO CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Mr. Michael A. Brown: I'm pleased to rise today to thank the Ontario Cattlemen's Association for coming to Queen's Park to host their eighth annual corn-fed-beef barbecue. It just gets better and better.

The Ontario Cattlemen are 19,000 beef producers in 49 counties and districts across the province. In 2010, the industry contributed \$918 million to Ontario agriculture, up more than 5% from the year before, and we expect that number to grow.

As cattle farmers overcome the challenges of the recent recession, I want them to know that this government's work is not done. For our cattle farmers, we are turning the corner by creating new jobs, boosting export sales and opening new sources of revenue by expanding processing plants across rural Ontario. We're investing in

buy-local initiatives that are getting more families to put local beef on their plates and we're working to get hundreds of grocery stores to source high-quality Ontario beef. In other words, we're building a sustainable, profitable beef industry and we're doing it together.

In the coming months, we're looking forward to working together on the details of a risk management program which will give our family farms the predictability, bankability and stability they need. We'll also keep pushing the federal government to get onside with risk management so that our cattle farmers can continue to do what they do best: produce the best beef in the world.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

COMITÉ PERMANENT DE LA POLITIQUE SOCIALE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL POLICY

M. Shafiq Qaadri: Je demande la permission de déposer un rapport du Comité permanent de la politique sociale et je propose son adoption.

I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Social Policy and move its adoption, and send it to you by way of page Erica.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Lisa Freedman): Your committee begs to report the following bill, as amended:

Bill 179, An Act to amend the Child and Family Services Act respecting adoption and the provision of care and maintenance / Projet de loi 179, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services à l'enfance et à la famille en ce qui concerne l'adoption et les soins et l'entretien.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

Report adopted.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 19, 2011, the bill is ordered for third reading.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

Mr. Pat Hoy: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs and move its adoption.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Lisa Freedman): Your committee begs to report the following bill without amendment:

Bill 186, An Act to amend the Tobacco Tax Act / Projet de loi 186, Loi modifiant la Loi de la taxe sur le tabac.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

Report adopted.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 17, 2011, the bill is ordered for third reading.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

TAXATION AMENDMENT ACT (INFORMAL CAREGIVERS), 2011

LOI DE 2011 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES IMPÔTS (AIDANTS NATURELS)

Mr. Levac moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 205, An Act to provide a tax credit to informal caregivers / Projet de loi 205, Loi visant à offrir un crédit d'impôt aux aidants naturels.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member for a short statement.

Mr. Dave Levac: The bill amends the Taxation Act, 2007, to provide a tax credit to individuals who act as caregivers for a relative in the relative's home or to individuals who act as caregivers for an elderly spouse.

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TRANSCANADA HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT ACT (HIGHWAY 17), 2011

LOI DE 2011 SUR L'AMÉLIORATION DE L'AUTOROUTE TRANSCANADIENNE (ROUTE NO 17)

Mr. Oraziotti moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 206, An Act to improve the part of the TransCanada Highway known as Highway 17 / Projet de loi 206, Loi visant à améliorer la section de l'autoroute transcanadienne connue sous le nom de route no 17.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member for a short statement.

Mr. David Oraziotti: I'm very pleased to reintroduce this bill, which would enact the TransCanada Highway Improvement Act. The act requires that the Minister of Transportation and Minister of Infrastructure work together with the federal Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities to make improvements to the part of the TransCanada known as Highway 17.

MOTIONS

HOUSE SITTINGS

Hon. Monique M. Smith: Mr. Speaker, I know you'll indulge me for just a moment, because I saw one of my

old friends, Rick Prashaw, here today, and I'd like to welcome him to the House.

Having done my little impromptu non-official business, I move that, pursuant to standing order 6(c)(ii), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. until 12 midnight on Tuesday, May 31, 2011.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Mr. Peter Kormos: On division.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Carried on division.

Motion agreed to.

BOB MACKENZIE

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I believe we have unanimous consent that up to five minutes be allotted to each party to speak in remembrance of the late Robert Mackenzie.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Agreed? Agreed.

Mr. Ted McMeekin: I'm proud to stand in my place today and to help recognize and celebrate the life and work of Robert Warren "Bob" Mackenzie. Going to the truth of it, Bob was a giant of a man and a local Hamilton legend. Who else could draw the kind of tribute crowd that we see today but somebody with the character of a Bob Mackenzie?

I was 14 years old when I first encountered Bob Mackenzie. We were neighbours. He lived just down the street from me on Hamilton Mountain, and while known to his friends simply as Bob, we kids always called him Mr. Mackenzie. It was kind of a respect thing, you know? I'm not sure why we thought he was so important, but we intuited that he was. Later in life, we discovered that was quite true—a very important man.

I'm pleased that his family is here today, including his oldest son, David, who was a very good friend of mine at university. We cut our teeth on some political things there, and it was easy to see Bob's influence through David's work there and subsequent work, and other family members' as well.

To know Bob Mackenzie was to know the history of the labour movement, the CCF and the NDP. Bob worked in many, many different sectors. He worked in a paper mill for a number of years and in the auto industry, and to no one's surprise, he was a gas appliance salesperson—always a great salesman.

He served in Windsor as a United Auto Workers organizer, and from time to time he ran in political campaigns. One of my very first Canadian political experiences was to go door to door when Bob ran against the late Father Sean O'Sullivan, before he was a father, federally. I understand Bob ran in 1955 in Windsor-Walkerville and later, when the CCF became the NDP, became one of the party's early stalwart organizers.

He understood, like Bobby Kennedy, that if you want to change the world, you don't get mad, you don't get even; you get elected. And Bob did get elected, after a stint on the staff of the United Steelworkers: he got elected because he became a Hamilton mainstay while he was there.

I knew Bob's predecessor, Reg Gisborn, when I worked here at Queen's Park. Being from Hamilton, I had the opportunity, from time to time, to drop Reg home. He was quite a card player: He would engage here, and his wife would meet me on the steps and thank me for getting Reg home safely. Reg and Bob were good friends, and Reg handed off the torch to Bob. Bob ran for election, and he got elected in 1975.

I was proud to go door to door with Bob Mackenzie back in 1975, and on another occasion, when the first New Democrat was elected in eastern Ontario: George Samis, I believe his name was. Bob and I did some work down there. Bob was re-elected in 1977, 1981, 1985 and 1990, and he surely would have been re-elected in 1995 were it not for his failing health.

Bob worked tenaciously on behalf of the working folk in Hamilton East. He never forgot who sent him to Queen's Park and why he was sent there. He was a consummate constituency MPP, but what would you expect from a man so grounded in the hopes and dreams and struggles of ordinary working men and women?

He was impressive to us young folk then. Someone once said, "Hope is to a young person what gasoline is to an automobile," and Bob exemplified that. He was an inspiration; he was always encouraging and affirming people. I remember that when we were engaged in the farm workers' struggles—Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers—Bob was always there to support us. He travelled the province seemingly endlessly, arguing for expanded labour rights, better health and safety standards and fairer compensation laws. Simply put, he pointed the way so that others could follow.

In 1990, Bob was appointed Minister of Labour, and his signature achievement was the Occupational Health and Safety Act and Bill 40, an act to improve worker access to union protection and a ban on scab labour. He also introduced improvements to pay equity and the extension of union rights to agricultural workers, something we might hear about a little later, I suspect. Bright, strong-willed, articulate and tough yet compassionate, Bob was always pleased to point a direction.

By the way, I should just mention that he probably served on every standing committee that ever existed in this place. It's incredible: You read the list of standing committees, and it's about eight pages long.

A great family man: Bob obviously had a great influence there, and certainly in our great city of Hamilton.

Growing up, my mom used to say that there are two kinds of people in the world: those who make a noise and those who make a difference. Bob was one of those folk who always made a difference. So to his family, we offer our condolences and our best wishes. We are all so much richer for the life and work of Brother Robert Warren Mackenzie.

Mr. John Yakabuski: It's a pleasure and honour for me to join in this tribute this afternoon to Bob Mackenzie. Liz Witmer, my colleague from Kitchener-Waterloo, originally intended to do this but unfortunately, due to a scheduling conflict, it was left to me. I know she would have done a much better job, but I'm going to endeavour to do my best.

Bob Mackenzie clearly was an iconic figure and a hero for the working class. Whether you were part of that movement or not, of which I certainly was not—and I'm not a member of the NDP, as you know, but I certainly knew about Bob Mackenzie. Regardless of what side of the political spectrum you come from, you've known and heard about Bob Mackenzie. He had that kind of effect on people.

In his early life, he actually lied about his age so that he could get on a Norwegian merchant navy fleet during the Second World War. It was there, while he was on that vessel, that he experienced a catharsis, possibly, or maybe he was always destined to go that way, but it was while he was serving on that ship that he became absolutely dedicated and committed as a socialist and as—how would we read it? I'm going to read his son David's words: "I suspect there was a lot of 'gospel' from the shipmates," David said. "There was a union crowd, and they were Scandinavian social democrats. He came back full of religion."

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Well, he certainly came back full of religion, but he didn't put his religion on the shelf. He acted upon it, and he acted upon his commitments.

He married his wife, Sylvia, I believe in 1949. I'm looking for my notes here—yes, in 1949, when he was working as an office clerk for the Ford Motor Company. It wasn't long when he was working there that he tried to organize the shop, which in those days got him promptly fired.

He worked in other different jobs: paper mills, the auto industry and served in Windsor as an organizer for the United Auto Workers and also, as my friend Mr. McMeekin said, a gas appliance salesman. He's had a varied career.

He ran in 1955 for the NDP before they were the NDP—for the CCF. He was unsuccessful. I think that was in Windsor-Walkerville. He was unsuccessful, came in second, but he was undaunted. He ran federally twice: in 1972 and in 1974. So that's three defeats. I can tell you, folks: Nobody can say Bob Mackenzie was a quitter. I've got to tell you, if I had lost my first election in 2003, I don't know if I ever would have run again. I really don't know, because one of the toughest things for people in politics is to put their name on a ballot, and the reason it's tough is, there's a tremendous fear of losing. How tough do you have to be if you lose three elections and you're still so committed to your cause and the ideals that you believe in that you're still coming back?

Bob Mackenzie kept coming back. In 1975, when the Davis government suffered huge losses, and Stephen Lewis was the New Democratic leader and they became

the official opposition, Bob Mackenzie was elected in the riding of Hamilton East, I believe—I can't keep track of these notes, but I believe it was Hamilton East—and he served for 20 years. In 1985, when the Liberals won 48 seats and the Conservatives won 52, but the Liberals actually won the popular vote, which gave legitimacy to the possible coalition between the NDP and the Liberals, Bob Mackenzie actually was one of the few members of the NDP who wanted to prop up the Miller Tory government and work with them, because he believed they would be more successful working with the red Tories that were in the House than they would be with the rural Liberals.

Bob Mackenzie always had his commitment in mind, and his commitment was the labour movement and social justice causes. In 1990, when the Bob Rae government was elected with their majority, he became the Minister of Labour, but Bob Mackenzie never referred to himself as the Minister of Labour; he referred to himself as the minister for labour, because that's how deep his beliefs were. Of course some of his greatest accomplishments were Bill 40, the banning of replacement workers, and other parts of that bill.

Interjection.

Mr. John Yakabuski: When I say that those were his greatest accomplishments, Rosie, I didn't necessarily say that I agreed with them. But he was certainly committed to his cause.

When he retired after 1994—he didn't seek re-election in 1995—he was still active with the New Democratic Party, and I believe he played a significant role in Andrea Horwath's by-election in Hamilton East in 2004—and obviously he was successful there as well. I was down in that by-election, too, campaigning. I didn't do as well. Clearly Bob Mackenzie was a heck of a lot better liked down there than John Yakabuski, and probably a lot of other places, too.

A little thing about how committed he was to his cause: When he was the Minister of Labour, at an early cabinet meeting, he was looking for aid for jobless steelworkers in the hard-hit uranium mining town of Elliot Lake—you notice that I say, Speaker, "uranium mining town of Elliot Lake." The energy minister at the time, Jenny Carter, was an ardent anti-nuclear activist, and she probably, without thinking quickly, said something to the effect—and I'm taking this from Thomas Walkom's book *Rae Days: The Rise and Follies of the NDP*. Jenny Carter responded, "Why bother? They'll all be dead of cancer soon anyway." The story is that Mackenzie was so angry that he literally lunged across the table at Carter. As Walkom puts it, "Luckily it was a wide table." That's the kind of committed activist and advocate that Bob Mackenzie was.

Now, I want to tell you how committed he was. I read this in his obituary. You want to talk about being committed to the cause. Bob Mackenzie's obituary said, "In lieu of flowers, please make contributions ... to the New Democratic Party of Ontario." So that is what you call commitment.

For all my colleagues, on behalf of Tim Hudak and the PC caucus, to the Mackenzie family gathered here today, to all of his great friends and supporters who have congregated to honour him today, we thank Bob Mackenzie, we thank you for supporting Bob Mackenzie, we thank his family for being with him all those years, and we thank him for the great contributions he made to this Legislature and to our great province of Ontario.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: It's my honour, really, to have the opportunity to say a few words about Bob Mackenzie on behalf of the NDP caucus, on behalf of New Democrats across the province, and on behalf of the people of Hamilton and of Hamilton East particularly.

The other speakers have talked a lot about the specifics of Bob's travels through life, from the time he was born in Orillia, to the merchant navy, when he spent some time there, as well as some of his other expeditions.

One of the things that I think is really clear is that Bob Mackenzie was a man who was really loved by all. He was somebody that everybody had great respect for, that everyone saw as somebody who was kind of head and shoulders above everyone else, just in terms of his presence, in terms of his integrity, in terms of the way he dealt with everyone, regardless of who you were, where you were from, how much money you made, what your role in life was. That's the kind of man that Bob Mackenzie was. He was the most decent of men. I think that anybody in this chamber who knew him would agree that that is definitely the case.

Bob, of course, as was said by Mr. Yakabuski, got a lot of his inspiration from that time when he was working on the Norwegian merchant navy vessel. He spent many years after that taking that inspiration and applying it to everyday life. I think that's one of the other very important things about Bob Mackenzie: He wasn't a person who only thought the big thoughts; he acted the big acts. He actually put into play everything that he believed, and he did it on every level.

I had the honour of spending some time at the memorial that we held for him in Hamilton. Story after story after story from people who worked for Bob, from his family members, from neighbours, friends, co-workers, fellow trade unionists and New Democrats—story after story after story about the mark that Bob Mackenzie left on their lives.

Others have talked already about the mark he left as a politician. Certainly, he had many, many accomplishments and many achievements from the first time he was elected up to the 20 years that he actually spent in this chamber, bringing forward in this chamber the voices, the issues, the concerns, the challenges, the inequities and the injustices that were faced by the people in his constituency, the people of Hamilton East.

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He was always a very passionate man, and so although he was very gentle when you met him—a very gentle and sweet man, many would say—when he got passionate about something, there was no stopping him, and he could be as large as the room in his voice, in his

presence, as long as it was in giving out to the rest of the Legislature, to the rest of the room, to the rest of wherever he was, the passion that he felt over whatever issue he was advocating for, or whatever person he was advocating for, which was most likely the case.

I think someone used the word “icon,” and that is absolutely true: He was an icon in so many ways in Hamilton. He was an icon, certainly, as an MPP, but he was an icon in so many other ways. He was an icon in the labour movement, as the person who brought forward the most progressive labour legislation that had been seen in this place in decades, and that was Bill 40, which has already been mentioned, of course. This is labour legislation that actually banned the use of replacement workers—or, as Mr. Kormos, the member from Welland, likes to say, scabs—in the province of Ontario. Bob Mackenzie was unwavering in his belief that scab labour was just the wrong thing to be allowed in this province. New Democrats still believe that to this day and still fight to get that legislation back in place in this province. Many, many people were touched by Bob, and many saw him as an icon.

There is a lot of opportunity, I think, when we think about people like Bob, to go on about very specific details. But I think one of the things that's clear is that regardless of all of the specific initiatives that Bob undertook—again, whether it's Bill 40, whether it's the work around unionization of farm workers, for example, around pay equity, around pay equity particularly for child care workers and others—Bob was somebody who embodied his beliefs, and he embodied them in a way that it wasn't about Bob. It wasn't about making Bob more famous or giving Bob a profile or making sure that Bob got re-elected. It was about making sure that the people and the injustices that he saw were actually being addressed and that he was doing something to make a real difference.

I think that's the level of his sincerity and his integrity. All of the specifics that we can talk about, I think, clearly paint a picture of a man of absolute sincerity and absolute integrity. In fact, in the memorial event that we held in Hamilton, one of the elected members in Hamilton, a member of Parliament, basically said that she got into politics because Bob actually was somebody who told her that it was a profession of integrity, that it was a profession where you could actually have integrity. I think that lots of times, people don't think politics is a profession of integrity, but certainly this is something that Bob did think, and he showed that day in and day out in the work that he did.

I said that I thought Bob was a traditional politician, but a traditional politician of the good kind, the kind of politician that people could go to and know that he would not only listen to what you were having to say, but try to change things for your benefit, to make you have some justice or feel that your issue had been resolved, but then take that issue and move it to the next level and change it for everyone. That was his social justice passion.

It's funny. When I think about Bob, one of the things I remember very clearly is that every Remembrance Day

in Hamilton, he and a couple of the other members at the time would get together after Remembrance Day ceremonies at a little coffee shop, and they'd have a conversation about politics and what was happening in the world. I was very honoured to be invited to a couple of those conversations when I was still on city council at the time. I can remember that Bob's biggest passion was always this very, very deep concern about the growing gap between those at the top and those at the bottom, the fact that people were making so much money at the top and the people at the bottom were really making peanuts, if anything at all. The poverty levels were increasing while the rich were getting very, very rich. This is one thing that really was a concern of Bob Mackenzie, I'm sure, right up until the day he died. He was just apoplectic about the injustice of the way that incomes were spreading in Ontario, in Canada and in many other places as well.

If there's one thing that we have to remember when we talk about Bob and we talk about our roles as politicians, it's that when we see these kinds of injustices, as New Democrats particularly, we don't just note them and move on; we try to do something about them. When Bob brought in legislation to help workers who were being scabbed at work, when he brought in pay equity legislation, when he did that kind of work, it was to address those kinds of inequities. The reality is, it's the policies we put in place in places like this that either feed those inequities or try to address them.

If there's one person who unwaveringly and always knew what he stood for and made sure that what he stood for was implemented in his daily work, it was Bob Mackenzie.

As a New Democrat, I'm very, very proud to have had a very short opportunity to walk the same streets as him as the MPP for that riding of Hamilton East, knock on the same doors, talk to the same people and hear some of the stories they had to share about their MPP Bob Mackenzie. I walked those streets from 2004 to 2007, hearing on every doorstep, in every corner of that riding, every neighbourhood, every legion hall and every union hall, stories about Bob Mackenzie and his legacy.

He was an excellent member of provincial Parliament. He was an excellent Minister of Labour, an excellent labour activist, New Democrat and obviously an excellent father and excellent husband to his wife.

In fact, it may be important to note that a Bob Mackenzie bursary was created at McMaster University in 1996, which is to be granted to labour study students in financial need. The Lupina Foundation established a graduate scholarship in Bob Mackenzie's name at the University of Toronto's Centre for Industrial Relations and Human Resources as well.

In closing, I just want to say that it's difficult to try to memorialize people enough when they've done so many great things and when their reputation and when their presence is so huge. So I just want to say that, for New Democrats, our history would not be the same if it wasn't for Bob Mackenzie. We value him and everything he did to the greatest extent.

On behalf of New Democrats, I want to say that we give our greatest condolences to those he left behind and his family, the family that did help him to achieve all of those things: his wife, Sylvia; his children David, Stephen, Kim, Dan, Andrew and Lori; as well as his grandchildren Susannah, Robert, Lily, Christina and Graeme.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd like to thank the honourable members for their participation in the Bob Mackenzie tribute today. I thank the family for being here at the Legislature today and thank so many of his former colleagues for coming back to the Legislature. I think it clearly demonstrates the high esteem in which Bob Mackenzie was held by so many members of this Legislature.

On behalf of the members, our condolences go out to the family. I assure the family members that copies of Hansard from today's proceedings, as well as a DVD presentation of today, will be sent to the family as a lasting remembrance of this tribute to Bob Mackenzie. Thank you all for joining us.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY

Hon. Margaret R. Best: Today is World No Tobacco Day. On May 31 of each year, the World Health Organization observes this day as a day to highlight the health risks associated with tobacco use and to advocate for effective policies to reduce consumption.

1550

Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death and disease in Ontario. In fact, 13,000 Ontarians die each year from smoking-related disease: mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, brothers, and sisters—all members of an Ontario family.

That is why today not only do we celebrate World No Tobacco Day but we also mark an important anniversary for Ontario. Five years ago today, on May 31, 2006, the McGuinty government passed its Smoke-Free Ontario Act. Since then, Ontario has become known around the world as a leader in tobacco control.

The McGuinty government has done more than any previous Ontario government to address the harm caused by tobacco use. We have established a province-wide law for smoke-free bars, restaurants and other enclosed workplaces. We have banned the display of tobacco products in convenience stores, and compliance exceeds 95%. We have protected children from second-hand smoke in motor vehicles and banned the sale of flavoured cigarillos. Yes, we have come a long way in the past five years, but until every day is World No Tobacco Day, there is still more work to do.

That is why I am pleased to reiterate this government's commitment to a renewed smoke-free Ontario

strategy. Our government is taking a whole-of-government approach to support our renewed smoke-free Ontario. We are working with other ministries and our partners because we—

Interruption.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): My apologies. Stop the clock. We'll allow somebody the opportunity to answer their phone.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it that phone? Mr. Butt will look after it. He'll butt it out on smoke-free day. Butt it out, Mr. Butt.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): It might have been the government House leader's, too.

My apologies, Minister.

Hon. Margaret R. Best: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will continue.

We are working with other ministries and our partners because we know that government cannot do it alone. However, with our cross-governmental and other partners, we continue to work diligently to prevent young people from starting to smoke; to make it easier for smokers to get the help they need to quit, because we recognize that smoking is an addiction; and we are working to reduce demand for dangerous tobacco products.

The Minister of Health Promotion and Sport will continue working across ministries and across sectors on the important next steps toward creating a province that is truly smoke-free; a province that is a healthier place for us to live, work and play.

Today, I ask all of you and all Ontarians to join me in marking World No Tobacco Day and the anniversary of the Smoke-Free Ontario Act by not smoking and by moving forward to a World No Tobacco Day, a world no tobacco week, a world no tobacco month, a world no tobacco year and a truly smoke-free Ontario.

In closing, I say to you all: Your health is indeed your wealth, and we all must work together to keep a healthier, more prosperous province.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Responses?

Mr. Gerry Martiniuk: I'm most pleased to have this opportunity to speak about World No Tobacco Day, as reducing smoking rates is an issue of great importance to me, especially relating to children. I commend the World Health Organization for its efforts to reduce tobacco consumption on this important day.

As health promotion critic for the official opposition and a former nicotine addict, I am committed to exploring ways of reducing the incidence of smoking, especially among our young people. Nicotine is recognized as a highly addictive drug—and, once hooked, it could become permanent.

As we know, the distribution of contraband cigarettes is largely in the hands of organized crime, and they are targeting our children. We all know that smoking is highly addictive, and the objective is to get our children hooked on nicotine and other drugs that can be sold for a profit.

Unfortunately, the present government has ignored the growing distribution of illegal tobacco and failed our children. With this in mind, I introduced a private member's bill last October that would have made, for the first time, smoking illegal by persons under 19 years of age. The intent of the bill was to protect young people from the dangers of nicotine addiction. It worries me that the low cost of illegal tobacco makes it affordable for our young people to experiment with smoking cigarettes. There is currently no law to stop our youth from using or possessing cigarettes. I hoped to change that with Bill 116, but, sadly, it was not supported by this government, who chose to ignore this continuing problem.

With prices as low as \$15 to \$20 a carton for illegal cigarettes, compared to approximately \$70 per carton for legal cigarettes, smoking has become an affordable addiction for our children. Furthermore, the growth of illegal cigarettes means that their purchase is no longer regulated by legal outlets, which are required to ascertain the age of purchasers in an effort to protect our children.

A research project conducted by the Canadian Convenience Stores Association saw 22,498 cigarette butts collected from 155 Ontario and Quebec high schools. In Ontario, 26% of the butts collected were contraband. The 2008 provincial Auditor General's report estimated that Ontario failed to collect \$500 million in tobacco taxes each year, largely due to contraband tobacco. Unfortunately, this government chooses to ignore the problem, and it will only get worse. So many young lives are being sacrificed.

This government protects young people from cigarette smoke by banning smoking in cars, yet they refuse to act to make smoking by children illegal. In Ontario, it is presently not against the law for a child to smoke. I believe that if it is illegal for children under the age of 19 to possess and consume alcohol, surely it should also be illegal for children to possess, buy and consume nicotine products.

I believe we have an obligation to use all means to protect our children from experimenting with such a highly addictive and deadly substance.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I'm pleased to rise today in the House to recognize World No Tobacco Day.

The tobacco epidemic kills nearly six million people each year worldwide. After high blood pressure, tobacco is the biggest contributor to the epidemic of non-communicable diseases, such as heart attack, stroke, cancer and emphysema, which account for 63% of all deaths. Smokers are also more susceptible to certain communicable diseases, such as tuberculosis and pneumonia.

No consumer product kills as many people, and as needlessly, as does tobacco. Tobacco killed 100 million people in the 20th century, and unless we act now, it could kill up to one billion people in the 21st century. All of these deaths will have been entirely preventable.

We need everyone on board for this important fight. We need to work together to ensure prevention, to reverse the truly disturbing rise in cancer across the country, and we need to ensure that the next generation of Ontarians doesn't pick up the nicotine habit.

As MPPs, we must step up to the plate and make sure that we do everything in our power to curb tobacco use for future generations.

1600

The NDP is proud to have worked closely with the cancer society on many different initiatives. In partnership with the Canadian society, the member for Brant and I successfully passed a private members' bill that banned the sale of individually sold candy-flavoured cigarillos. That was a big victory. Unfortunately, although the bill was passed in this Legislature in November 2008—I actually attended when we had the ceremony with the Lieutenant Governor—the McGuinty government's unwillingness to enact the law allowed for individually sold cigarillos to be available in our stores in Ontario until the summer of 2011. That is 18 months where the new generation of smokers was picking up the habit.

Because the tobacco industry can afford high-priced lawyers, they have found loopholes around cigarillo legislation. That is why, earlier this spring, I introduced a private member's bill that will finally close the door on all flavoured tobacco products, whether it is smokeless tobacco, the new chews that you see all over the ball diamonds this summer, or unmarked tobacco that is sold to our youth to get them hooked on this product. But what do we get from the health promotion minister on banning flavoured tobacco? So far we've seen delays and inaction.

If we are going to get serious about reversing the rise in cancer rates—and we all know that 80% of cancers are preventable—we will need to see a change from the Ministry of Health Promotion. Right now, we have a patchwork of services and policies, and there's no reason for this.

Many Ontarians would be surprised to know that the number of smokers in Ontario is not going down; it is going up. Why? Well, 50% of cigarettes smoked in certain areas of Ontario are contraband tobacco that can be bought quite cheaply. The Canadian Cancer Society knows about it, Cancer Care Ontario knows about it, the Lung Association knows about it. We all do. They all wanted a well-coordinated health promotion strategy to deal with contraband tobacco, but what did we get? We get Bill 186, a one-legged stool that will not stand up to anything.

At committee, the members of all three parties could see that the bill was flawed, but the bill was rushed through the House after being introduced in the dying days of this government, and then the government time-allocated the bill so the committee was not able to do any fixes to the flawed bill. Once again, the Minister of Health Promotion was asleep at the switch and cancer prevention could have been done, but Bill 186 won't fix the problem of contraband tobacco.

I want to end by saying that I clearly understand the difference between traditional tobacco use by First Nations—and a world without tobacco certainly won't change the traditional ceremonies that take place on First Nations.

PETITIONS

CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Mr. Bill Murdoch: I have the member from Huron—Bruce here with me, and I'm sure she feels somewhat with me on these petitions. It's to save our jails, and it's to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the Ontario provincial government has unilaterally ordered the closing of the Owen Sound and Walkerton provincial jails with no public input;"—remember that—"and

"Whereas staff of both facilities will be forced to relocate from their home communities and the two rural municipalities will lose up to \$3 million each in wages spent; and

"Whereas the local aboriginal offenders will be forced away from their communities and local native resources. All offenders will be moved out of their localities, rehabilitative resources and family visitation. Intermittent sentenced offenders would have jobs placed in jeopardy as the travel to Penetanguishene would be too great; and

"Whereas rural communities hard hit by recession and manufacturing job loss need these well-paying jobs in their community;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Premier McGuinty support that the Owen Sound and Walkerton jails remain open until such time as a new regional corrections facility can be opened."

Look, I have a whole slew of them, tons of them. It must be everybody in Bruce and Grey and Huron who signed these.

CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Mr. Peter Kormos: I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario provincial government has unilaterally ordered the closing of the Owen Sound and Walkerton provincial jails with no public input; and

"Whereas staff of both facilities will be forced to relocate from their home communities and the two rural municipalities will lose up to \$3 million each in wages spent there; and

"Whereas the local aboriginal offenders will be forced away from their communities and local native resources. All offenders will be moved out of their localities, rehabilitative resources and family visitation. Intermittent sentenced offenders would have jobs placed in jeopardy as the travel to Penetanguishene would be too great; and

"Whereas rural communities hard hit by recession and manufacturing job loss need these well-paying jobs in their community;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Premier McGuinty support that the Owen Sound and Walkerton jails remain open until such time as a new regional corrections facility can be opened."

This petition was certified by the Clerk and I've affixed my signature and indicate my strong support.

PARAMEDICS

Mr. Michael A. Brown: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas paramedics play a vital role in protecting the health and safety of Ontarians; and

"Whereas paramedics often put their own health and safety at risk, going above and beyond their duty in servicing Ontarians; and

"Whereas the government of Ontario annually recognizes police officers and firefighters with awards for bravery; and

"Whereas currently no award for paramedic bravery is awarded by the government of Ontario; and

"Whereas Ontario paramedics deserve recognition for acts of exceptional bravery while protecting Ontarians;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Enact Bill 115, a private member's bill introduced by MPP Maria Van Bommel on October 6, 2010, An Act to provide for the Ontario Award for Paramedic Bravery."

I agree with this petition and thank Paul Guertin of the Algoma EMS for providing me with copies.

SOCIAL WORK

Mr. Toby Barrett: "Petition to Stop the Unlawful Practice of Social Work in Ontario by Unregulated and Unregistered Children's Aid Society (CAS) Workers.

"To the Legislative Assembly:

"Whereas many children and their families have been and continue to be adversely affected by the actions of CAS workers who are engaged in the practice of social work but not registered with the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (the college) as required under law; and

"Whereas unregulated and unregistered CAS workers are entering schools, detaining children and violating the rights of children and parents under sections 7 and 9 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms to the right to life, liberty and security of their persons, as well as the right not to be detained; and

"Whereas the Social Work and Social Service Work Act (1998) requires that all persons who engage in the practice of social work in the province of Ontario are required to be registered with the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers; and

"Whereas the college has a duty under sections 3.1 and 3.2 of the act to regulate the practice of social work in Ontario to protect the public interest but has failed to fulfill its legal mandate since the year 2000; and

"Whereas the unlawful practice of social work by CAS workers is causing significant harm to children and families and bringing disrepute to the profession of social work and undermining the administration of justice and the rule of law;

"We, the undersigned citizens of Ontario, petition the members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to take steps to protect children and families in the following way:

"That the government of Ontario take steps to ensure the Social Work and Social Service Work Act (1998) is properly enforced to ensure that all CAS workers who are engaged in the practice of social work be required to be registered with the college, as is required under existing legislation."

I sign the petition.

ÉDUCATION EN FRANÇAIS

M. Michael Prue: J'ai une pétition à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario:

« Attendu que l'article 23 de la Charte canadienne des droits et libertés garantit l'accès à une éducation de langue française subventionnée par les fonds publics; et

« Attendu qu'en février 2007, le gouvernement a dit reconnaître la pénurie sérieuse d'écoles catholiques de langue française à Toronto et que les élèves francophones se voient privés des droits dont bénéficient les élèves ontariens anglophones et, par conséquent, a décidé d'octroyer des fonds aux conseils scolaires catholiques de langue française afin de soit construire de nouvelles écoles ou de faire l'achat d'écoles déjà existantes, jugées "excédentaires", auprès des autres conseils scolaires; et

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« Attendu que le Toronto District School Board est jusqu'à ce jour le principal héritier de la majorité des édifices scolaires et des terrains à vocation éducative à Toronto; et

« Attendu que plusieurs écoles du TDSB ne fonctionnent pas à capacité ministérielle et pourtant ces écoles ne sont pas mises en vente auprès des autres conseils scolaires; ou alors lorsque ces écoles sont enfin mises en vente, elles sont souvent offertes en parcelles d'école ou de terrain, plutôt que dans leur intégralité, de sorte que les conseils scolaires catholiques francophones se dans l'obligation de décliner l'offre d'achat parce que le terrain est insuffisant, ce qui permet au TDSB de maximiser leurs revenus à leur seul bénéfice; et

« Attendu que cette situation perdure depuis plusieurs années et que la ministre de l'Éducation continue à autoriser la vente de parcelles de terrain ou d'écoles tout en sachant qu'il existe depuis longtemps un besoin urgent d'écoles catholiques françaises, et ce pendant que certaines écoles du TDSB fonctionnent en dessous de la capacité ministérielle; et

« Attendu que malgré ce besoin urgent et la disponibilité de fonds nécessaires, les élèves du conseil catholique de l'est de Toronto attendent depuis des années une école secondaire promise, et, vu le peu de volonté politique pour régler cette impasse, les élèves de l'est de Toronto craignent d'attendre encore longtemps;

« Nous, soussignés, membres de la communauté catholique francophone et francophile du grand Toronto et la communauté élargie de l'Ontario, adressons à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario la pétition suivante :

« Que la ministre de l'Éducation cesse d'autoriser la location et la vente par le TDSB de parcelles de ses lieux scolaires car cette pratique va clairement à l'encontre de l'esprit de la Loi sur l'éducation (en particulier, le règlement 444/98), en empêchant que ces lieux à vocation éducationnelle—qui ont été donnés au TDSB—continuent à desservir les élèves de l'Ontario, y compris les élèves francophones. »

PARAMEDICS

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario from people in Spanish, Ontario.

“Whereas paramedics play a vital role in protecting the health and safety of Ontarians; and

“Whereas paramedics often put their own health and safety at risk, going above and beyond their duty in servicing Ontarians; and

“Whereas the government of Ontario annually recognizes police officers and firefighters with awards for bravery; and

“Whereas currently no award for paramedic bravery is awarded by the government of Ontario; and

“Whereas Ontario paramedics deserve recognition for acts of exceptional bravery while protecting Ontarians;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Enact Bill 115, a private member's bill introduced by MPP Maria Van Bommel on October 6, 2010, An Act to provide for the Ontario Award for Paramedic Bravery.”

I support this and will affix my signature.

DOG OWNERSHIP

Mrs. Julia Munro: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas aggressive dogs are found among all breeds and mixed breeds; and

“Breed-specific legislation has been shown to be an expensive and ineffective approach to dog bite prevention; and

“Problem dog owners are best dealt with through education, training and legislation encouraging responsible behaviour;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To repeal the breed-specific sections of the Dog Owners' Liability Act (2005) and to implement legislation that encourages responsible ownership of all dog breeds and types.”

As I am in agreement, I have affixed my signature and given it to page Jonah.

ÉDUCATION EN FRANÇAIS

M^{me} France Gélinas: J'ai une pétition des gens de Toronto pour des écoles scolaires françaises adéquates.

« Attendu que l'article 23 de la Charte canadienne des droits et libertés garantit l'accès à une éducation de langue française subventionnée par les fonds publics; et

« Attendu qu'en février 2007 le gouvernement a dit reconnaître la pénurie sérieuse d'écoles de langue française à Toronto et que les élèves francophones se voient privés des droits dont bénéficient les élèves ontariens anglophones et, par conséquent, a décidé d'octroyer des fonds aux conseils scolaires de langue française afin de soit construire de nouvelles écoles ou de faire l'achat d'écoles déjà existantes, jugées “excédentaires”, auprès des autres conseils scolaires; et

« Attendu que le Toronto District School Board est jusqu'à ce jour le principal héritier de la majorité des édifices scolaires et des terrains à vocation éducative à Toronto; et

« Attendu que plusieurs écoles du TDSB ne fonctionnent pas à capacité ministérielle et pourtant ces écoles ne sont pas mises en vente auprès des autres conseils scolaires; ou alors lorsque ces écoles sont enfin mises en vente, elles sont souvent offertes en parcelles d'école ou de terrain, plutôt que dans leur intégralité, de sorte que le conseils scolaires francophones se voient dans l'obligation de décliner l'offre d'achat parce que le terrain est insuffisant, ce qui permet au TDSB de maximiser leurs revenus à leur seule bénéfice; et

« Attendu que cette situation perdure depuis plusieurs années et que la ministre de l'Éducation continue à autoriser la vente de parcelles de terrain ou d'écoles tout en sachant qu'il existe depuis longtemps un besoin urgent d'écoles françaises, et ce pendant que certaines écoles du TDSB fonctionnent en dessous de la capacité ministérielle; et

« Attendu que malgré ce besoin urgent et la disponibilité de fonds nécessaires, les élèves du conseil catholique de l'est de Toronto attendent depuis des années les deux écoles (élémentaire et secondaire) promises, et, vu le peu de volonté politique pour régler cette impasse, les élèves de l'est de Toronto craignent d'attendre encore longtemps;

« Nous, soussignés, membres de la communauté francophone et francophile du grand Toronto et la communauté élargie de l'Ontario, adressons à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario la pétition suivante :

« Que la ministre de l'Éducation cesse d'autoriser la location et la vente par le TDSB de parcelles de ses lieux scolaires car cette pratique va clairement à l'encontre de l'esprit de la Loi sur l'éducation (en particulier, le règlement 444/98), en empêchant que ces lieux à vocation éducationnelle—qui ont été donnés au TDSB—continuent à desservir les élèves de l'Ontario, y compris les élèves francophones. »

J'appuie cette pétition. Je vais y apposer mon nom et demander à John de l'amener au greffier.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr. Michael Prue: I have a petition which I present on behalf of the Speaker. It reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario Works (OW) and Ontario disability support program (ODSP) benefits are so dangerously low they do not allow people to meet their basic human needs for safe housing and adequate nutrition, Ontarians are becoming sick and dying prematurely. In order to safeguard the health and dignity of the most vulnerable people in our society,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Increase social assistance rates so that they are based on actual local living costs, including housing and food, through a process that includes meeting with stakeholder organizations to collaboratively determine the appropriate level of support to provide social assistance recipients in Ontario;

"As a first step towards adequacy, immediately increase social assistance rates by \$100 per month for every adult; and

"Ensure that any changes to the special diet program for those with health challenges requiring therapeutic diets be evidence-based and part of a comprehensive transformation of the social assistance system."

As I said, it's presented on behalf of the Speaker, but I am in agreement and would sign my name thereto.

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ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I move that, pursuant to standing order 47 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 196, An Act to amend the Election Act with respect to certain electoral practices, when Bill 196 is next called as a government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill, without further debate or amendment, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading, which order may then be immediately called; and

That, when the order for third reading is called, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

That no deferral of the second or third reading votes, pursuant to standing order 28(h), shall be permitted; and

That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bells shall be limited to five minutes.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Further debate?

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: I was going to say a few words on this bill, Mr. Speaker.

Interjection.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: I would have thought that the government would speak first, but apparently they're feeling a little chagrined that this bill has been brought to the House in its current form, which is a shame because there is some need for improvements in the way in which

bills like this come to the House, and this government has been sadly lacking in bringing a fulsome bill to the House at a very late date.

At first, there were some reports in the press about whether or not certain events took place during the last federal election. All of a sudden, within a few days the government brought in this bill. I suppose they wanted to create the impression perhaps that there had been some wrongdoing. There were actually some accusations that one particular party was more involved than another particular party.

Really, this bill, which is called the Ensuring Integrity in Ontario Elections Act—certainly I don't think there was a lot of integrity when this bill was brought forward in the way in which it was brought forward, and that's too bad, because I think this House deserves more respect than this bill perhaps, in the way it came forward, would suggest.

Also, this bill falls far short of maintaining integrity in the election process because they don't actually speak about the one issue in which there is a significant amount of integrity lacking in the province of Ontario's election process, and that would be the Working Families issue. The Working Families issue, of course, is one which we feel very strongly about.

There is an Election Act in Ontario, and that Election Act lays out very clearly the amounts of money that political parties can spend. There are limits to that money. You're only allowed to spend X number of dollars. I think it's somewhere in the order of \$3 million or \$4 million in television advertising during the course of an election writ period. But, of course, if you have a partner who is not the Liberal Party of Ontario, for instance, and that partner shares your values and wants to spend X number of dollars—we think those dollars will be in excess of \$6 million or \$7 million—they effectively double or triple the amounts of money you can spend during an election period.

You can say, "We're not related." However, the board of directors, I think, has three or four people—and I have the names in my notes here: Marcel Wieder, Don Guy and others who sit on both boards; Pat Dillon, who has multiple appointments by the Liberal government. He sits on the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, among other things, and he runs the Working Families. Don Guy, of course, is president of Pollara; he does research and polling for both companies and sits on the boards of directors. He's the director of the McGuinty campaign. The relationship between these two organizations and the people who represent them is so tight, it would be a terribly naive person who didn't believe that these two associations are working hand in hand when it comes to advertising. And of course, when the advertising hits the air, it is obvious which party the Working Families Coalition is supporting; they're very much supporting the Liberal Party of Ontario.

Although the attack ads have been brutal in the past and have been extremely negative in the last couple of months—they ran a series of ads in, I believe it was, late

April and early May, and they ran a couple of ads during the Academy Awards. Of course, when you run ads during the Academy Awards, it means that you've got a few bucks behind you. There was no question what those ads were about, and yet this bill, brought into the House in a terrible hurry by the Liberals, Bill 196, called the Ensuring Integrity in Ontario Elections Act, doesn't mention that kind of lack of integrity going on in this province. It doesn't mention it one time in this bill, and that's a shame.

This bill also fails to address the concerns that the disabled community has expressed concerning their access to voting booths, their ability to cast their ballots in a fair and reasonable way, how they get to a polling booth and where those polling booths are located so that people with disabilities are able to cast their vote in a fair way. That's an issue that has been around for at least the last four years, and this bill, brought in in such a hurry, completely ignores those wishes, and those are some very reasonable issues that could be solved without great expense. It's just a matter of changing or tweaking the legislation.

This would have been a wonderful bill to have put some of those things in to allow the community of disabled people in Ontario to have a much easier time getting to the ballots. But, no, it's not here. This bill was brought in for political purposes, and it doesn't address many of the aspects in Ontario elections that talk about integrity or the lack thereof, and those things that lack integrity in our elections system are going to continue regardless of this bill, and that's an opportunity missed. It's too bad.

It's also an extremely broad bill, and I think the government would find, if they were to take it to committee, for instance, and have some discussion on it, which at this late date in the legislative calendar is highly unlikely, but if they did that—I guess the time allocation motion doesn't allow for that to happen. I guess this bill would be very difficult to enforce, and it's certainly very unlikely to ensure any significant degree of integrity in the election process.

Perhaps that's not strange, perhaps that's not unusual, coming from this government with their record over the last few years. It was eight years ago when Dalton McGuinty stood in front of the cameras and talked about not raising your taxes. Then, last Sunday, after we brought out our Changebook, the Premier had the nerve to stand there and say, "Well, they're just saying these things to get elected." Well, what was that television ad all about, saying, "I'm not going to raise your taxes," when he knew full well, without a shadow of a doubt, that taxes were going up? He was just saying something to get elected. Then, of course, you always judge others by your own standards, and he accused us of bringing out a document that we didn't have confidence in or that wasn't full of integrity. Well, in the future, you will see, as the people of Ontario will see, that when Conservatives make promises, they keep their promises. A

promise made is a promise kept. That is our mantra, and that is something we have done in the past.

1630

Interjections.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: Oh, talking about keeping promises seems to have woken up the Liberals. I'm afraid your waking-up process might be just a titch late. I think a large number of the people of Ontario have already decided on where the issue of integrity lies in Ontario and what they're going to do about it come this fall.

This bill was introduced with only six days left in the House, and here it is with two full days left and they've brought in a time allocation motion, hoping to get this bill through, I suppose, without a lot of discussion, without any committee time. That's a sad state of affairs.

It was slapped together rather quickly after some media reports, which I mentioned, talking about some supposed corrupt practices that took place during the federal election. I think there's a sincere question about what the government felt about bringing in this bill and the name of the bill. When they call it the "integrity act," it kind of smacks of insincerity. Of course, integrity hasn't been the Liberal strong suit, when they've promised not to raise taxes and then go ahead and do it, even after two elections. It'll be interesting in this coming election whether the Liberals will promise not to raise taxes again or whether indeed they will promise not to break their promises again. One may have more integrity attached to it than the other, but I suspect we won't see any promises of that nature coming between now and October 6.

Our member from Wellington-Halton Hills has introduced Bill 195, which is An Act to amend the Election Finances Act to ban collusion in electoral advertising. That bill is designed to bring light into the activities of organizations like the Working Families Coalition, which would attempt to usurp the election laws of this province. That bill has far more integrity involved in it than this Bill 196.

It's interesting how Bills 196 and 195 are right next to each other. The member from Wellington-Halton Hills has been working on his bill for some time, and it shows in the way the bill was drafted. It shows that he has given some careful thought to the process. If that bill were passed and carried through, it would indeed bring some integrity to the principles around the Election Act.

M^{me} France Gélinas: On a point of order, Madam Speaker: I don't think we have a quorum.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: Oh, my goodness. On such an important issue?

The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Todd Decker): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Todd Decker): A quorum is now present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member for Halton may continue.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: Thank you, Speaker. I must say, when the government has a bill before the House that is talking about the integrity of this place, I'm shocked that the government would not keep a quorum.

Interjections.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: I say to the members, who—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Order.

The member may continue.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Again, I'll just say that I'm shocked that the government would not keep a quorum during such an important debate, on something that they feel is so important that with two days left in the House, they bring in a time allocation motion, and then don't bother to keep a quorum in the House, which is their responsibility.

Interjections.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: You've been here for eight years. My goodness. Don't you realize that it's the government's responsibility to keep a quorum in this House? Even though you can't keep a quorum in the House, you won't speak to the bill, either. I think you're ashamed of it.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I remind the member to speak through the Chair.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: Good old Bill 196, yes, the Ensuring Integrity in Ontario Elections Act, which is an interesting name. It's one that may go down in history as one of the more infamous bills that this government brought in in its dying days. The bill will do some interesting things. If someone is found guilty of fooling around with special ballots or improper voting procedures or wilful misconduct, it will increase fines from \$5,000 to \$25,000. However, the bill was slapped together so quickly that I doubt whether anyone would ever be found guilty of the terms and conditions that the bill lays out. That kind of smacks of insincerity in itself.

The sentences, which have been up to no more than six months, now are increased to two years less a day. So anyone found guilty of this and, in a serious case, sent to prison would be in for two years less a day, when they could do some wonderful work for Ontario cleaning up the roadways, perhaps cleaning up some waterways, making the parks look better. Maybe they could—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Order.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I think you'd look good in it.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Government House leader.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: Apparently the House leader is expecting me to be in an orange coverall suit some day. But I think that perhaps with the integrity of this place, it would smack much louder of being the other side of the House that might end up doing some work cleaning up the roads, cleaning up our parks, raking leaves, putting something back into society. We've got a very large correctional facility in the town of Milton, one which I have toured a couple of times. I think the prisoners in that facility who are there for two years less a day would look

forward to the responsibility of getting out and cleaning up and helping to make Ontario appear to be a more beautiful place.

Other things that this bill might do is if someone inside or outside of Ontario—given the power of the Internet today, I suppose it could be worldwide. The bill would purport to make it illegal for someone inside or outside of Ontario to prevent or impede or give wrong information to someone as to which poll they should go to or which party a particular candidate belonged to, things of that nature. Well, I don't know. I've been involved in elections for a good number of years now, and I don't think I've ever heard of those kinds of activities taking place.

But the government feels that this is such an important piece of legislation that they bring it in with six days left, and with two days left they bring in a time allocation motion for it—not going to give it any consideration, not going to give any time to go to committee with it. They're just going to ram it through and say, "Yes, we passed an integrity in elections act," improving and ensuring integrity in Ontario elections. I don't think this bill is going to have any such effect as that, and it's too bad that this Parliament, in the last week of this government's mandate, has sunk to this level.

I think the people of Ontario are pleased—the reports that we're getting on the Changebook say it's going to make a real difference to Ontario. It's a directional document that's going to go in a direction that this government is not going in. This government is going to increase taxes, increase red tape and drive businesses out of Ontario. A Changebook is going to rebate taxes, cut costs, and we're—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Order.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, for trying to control this most rowdy House. The government should be ashamed of themselves, not having even the least bit of integrity to listen to the other side. They've got their minds made up. They're not going to listen to the other side; they're going to cram through a piece of legislation with yet another time allocation bill.

1640

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Mr. Peter Kormos: There most certainly is, at least from this side of the House.

These used to be an extraordinary thing, these time allocation motions. They used to be the sort of thing that was rarely used. They used to be exceptional. They've become the norm rather than extraordinary, and they've become routine rather than exceptional.

What I find interesting is that it appears that today the Liberals aren't even going to stand up and explain why they need this time allocation motion. The Liberals move a motion and then they don't defend it. It's clear that neither the Conservatives nor the New Democrats agree with the proposition. I think one of the most offensive and problematic things about it is that it denies public

hearings. I recall the conversation with the government House leader where I suggested to her that it might not require extensive public hearings, that it may require only an hour or two, and that I would be quite prepared, on behalf of New Democrats, to agree to do that in the evening. It would require the unanimous consent of House—not a problem. Because public hearings, in my view and in the view of a whole lot of people, are essential in the course of the process of any bill through first, second and third reading, even if it's only a very brief public hearing. Public hearings provide many things, but one of the things it does provide is that it permits the performance of due diligence.

I've already told you—I told you yesterday—that I thought there were parts of the bill that made it much weaker than the government would have us want to believe, and I tried to be specific about indicating what those parts were. I recounted the veritable feud between the parliamentary assistant for the Attorney General and the quite capable member for Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock, because I referred you to the Hansard record. That was in reference to the Arnott private member's bill, where the parliamentary assistant's marching orders from the office of the comandante, the capo di tutti capi, the Premier's office, were that the Liberals weren't to support the private member's bill by Arnott, which is very much a companion piece to this. One of the things that the parliamentary assistant said was, "Collusion? I don't know what collusion means. This is very vague. This is very indeterminable." Well, the very clever member for Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock, who's talented in so many ways, including being literate, stood up in response to the parliamentary assistant and said, "I know what collusion means because I looked it up in the dictionary." And then he read into the record the definition of "collusion." I suspect the member for Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock knew that already, because as I say, he's a clever and literate person. But he clearly wanted to impress upon the parliamentary assistant that there are tools that you can use if you're confused about what a particular word means.

You'll recall that the debate yesterday was very much about Bill 195 and Bill 196. It was very much about Bill 195 as an amendment to the Election Act being quashed by the government—unthinkingly, I would put to you—and Bill 196, which has been forced through the process.

The government purports to be addressing dirty tricks and cited, as the Attorney General did on the day of first reading in his ministerial statement, newspaper reports. I don't think anybody can refer me to another time when this Parliament, this chamber, has relied upon anecdotes in the newspaper as a basis for developing policy. I find it amazing: anecdotes, unproven anecdotes, anecdotes that—I remember the parliamentary assistant used the word "fuzzy" to describe some of the language in Bill 195—anecdotes that were in themselves pretty fuzzy, because there was anecdotal reportage of some dirty trickery. We didn't know who was performing it. We didn't know how it was being performed. We certainly

don't know whether or not the provisions, the very modest provisions, of Bill 196 will address it. But I did have occasion to refer to the report of Greg Sorbara, the select committee in 2009, back in this chamber, and in particular, recommendation number 26, which was a recommendation that responded to the submission of Ontario electoral officer Greg Essensa to that select committee. The parliamentary assistant to the Attorney General was on that select committee; so was Mr. Sterling, the member for Carleton-Mississippi Mills; and so was the member for Kenora-Rainy River; however, I attended through the course of the committee as a substitute.

What troubled people yesterday during the course of the debate was the fact that this type of amendment to an election act usually occurs with some tripartite consideration; it certainly did when the amendments were presented with respect to the Sorbara report. They were shared with respective caucuses—in draft form, as I recall it. The respective caucuses found that a considerably mature way to produce that kind of evidence, because it's truly non-partisan. It's in all of our interests to have a healthy and, that word that's used so often now, robust Election Act and election financing act.

But this came out of the blue, this Bill 196. It came from so far—I don't want to say "in left field"; it came so far in right field, because I'm a fan of the left field. It came from so far in the right field that it was like a curve that came from up behind you on your right, and that was after the government House leader, properly, informed her opposition counterparts about a week before that there was no new legislation coming, that that was it for the legislative process.

Why wouldn't the Attorney General, the Premier's office, have initiated some pretty prompt discussions with opposition parties if they really felt this bill was critical and talk about how it can be processed through the House? Why wouldn't they have done that? As I say, I felt strongly, and still do, that committee hearings are critical. I can't think of a single bill—maybe somebody can come up with an example of one—that shouldn't go to committee, and this bill certainly should.

I wanted to hear from Mr. Essensa. Was he the source of this particular drafting? Was it his proposal to the government that resulted in this, or was it somebody else? I have regard for Essensa. He's got experience, and he was quite helpful to the select committee—the select Sorbara committee—when that committee discussed those matters in 2009. I would have wanted to know why the Attorney General only picked these two specific amendments rather than addressing the whole issue of third party advertising.

Essensa recommended, and that was recommendation number 26 in the Sorbara report, that amendments to the Election Act of Ontario and the election financing act contain controls over third party advertisers. One of the issues was collusion. That was the word that Essensa used, that's the word that's used in other legislation in other jurisdictions, and it was indeed what was referred to in recommendation number 26.

So here we are. We have—two years less a day. Holy cow. First you've got to catch the guys, and then you've got to prosecute them; Elections Ontario has no investigative force. And then the poor Conservatives get derided for their chain gang policy.

1650

Just as an aside, are there people who don't remember when the Mimico inmates did the yard work at Queen's Park? I remember that for years, when I was first elected; they did it for years. And I'll tell you, the guys would be out there doing the lawns and the flower gardens, and it would be, "Hey, Pete," "Hey, Pete," because I represented a whole whack of them. They were up from the Niagara region and they were doing their time at Mimico.

The remarkable thing about that is that guys in the joint love that sort of activity. I disagree with the leader of the Conservative Party. He thinks it's some sort of punishment. No. Guys in the joint love to get out there. Have you ever been inside a joint? The smell of dirty socks and body odour in a concentrated space—60, 70, 80 guys slouched around a range, because, of course, the last two governments have gutted programming from our provincial institutions and have come to rely upon television as a babysitter. We lost institutions like Burtch reformatory, which was a farm reformatory. I was there many times. It grew a whole lot of the food for other institutions—other institutions that had workshops. People produced stuff for inside the reformatory system. As a matter of fact, Mimico itself produced park benches and park equipment for public purposes. Unfortunately, those programs have been all but eliminated. The staffing for those programs is gone.

Chain gangs aren't going to solve that problem. Chain gangs aren't going to solve the problem of the fact that one third of inmates in our provincial institutions are illiterate; they can't read or write. Chain gangs aren't going to solve the problem that a whole whack of our inmates are drug-addicted or alcohol-addicted. You've got all sorts of inmates who have fetal alcohol syndrome. You've got all sorts of inmates who have serious psychological disorders, who have no job skills, who have no life skills. One of the patterns of people being released from institutions is that many of them become homeless. They're released into homelessness.

I'm not talking about coddling prisoners; nobody is. And nobody is suggesting that prisoners should be sitting idle for eight, nine, 10, 12, however many hours a day. I've always believed, and I believe now, and New Democrats insist, that when you've got prisoners in prison, you've got an opportunity to intervene in their lives. You teach them how to read and write. You get them their high school diplomas. You teach them job skills. You teach them trades. And, yes, if the occasional inmate develops academic skills that allows him or her to get a college diploma, I say all the better, because that inmate is far less likely to be a recidivist.

I'm off point, aren't I, Speaker? But I very much wanted to speak to that particular issue.

Interjection.

Mr. Peter Kormos: I'm sorry. I didn't want to hurt anybody's feelings here, Speaker. And I know we've got a House leaders' meeting in exactly six minutes. When Ms. Smith, the honorable government House leader, who has been a formidable member of the chamber, of the assembly, and a delight to work with as House leader, gets up, I've got to follow her. Oh, here we go. So at that, I have to leave for a House leaders' meeting. I know our member from Nickel Belt will speak to this horrid time allocation motion during the balance of time available to us.

I want to hear what the government has to say. Why won't you allow committee hearings? Tell us. Tell us. The next rotation is you guys—you. Stand up and explain why we're not having committee hearings. Participate in this debate. You brought the motion. Participate in the debate. I don't understand what the problem is here. You've got a government caucus that's, what, 70-plus people. Many have eight or 12 or 16 years' experience or more here, but all of them have been here at least four years. They know that this place is about the debate. They know that this place is not a place where—it's not a—what do you call it?—a Rosedale garden party, even though I'm told some of those get pretty rough from time to time.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I'm not allowed in Rosedale because I don't qualify.

Mr. Peter Kormos: I understand. I don't get up there much myself. I couldn't tell a Maybach from a Maytag.

I want to know why the government members aren't speaking to the motion. It boggles the mind. I see some dangerously playing with BlackBerrys. They haven't learned that yet either. That lesson—

Mr. Jim Brownell: We're not playing; we're working on them.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Oh, they're working on them. Please.

Interjection: I'm composing a letter.

Mr. Peter Kormos: He's composing a letter.

Mr. Bruce Crozier: I'm responding to a family member.

Mr. Peter Kormos: And you're responding to the letter. Here's a pen.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I remind the member to—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Order. I remind the member to frame his comments to the Chair.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Thank you. Chair, when you're here, your job isn't to write letters to family members; it's to attend to government business.

Mr. Bruce Crozier: You don't even know what the hell it's about.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Mr. Crozier said.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I'd ask the members to come to order.

The member from Welland.

Mr. Peter Kormos: We've got a House leaders' meeting to go to, Mr. Yakabuski, so I leave the balance to the member for Nickel Belt. Thank you kindly.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I beg to inform the House that the member for Nepean—Carleton has withdrawn the late show standing in her name scheduled for 6 p.m.

Further debate?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I'm happy to be able to address this.

Yes, just for clarification, I did withdraw my late show scheduled for tonight, out of respect for our retiring members. We have members from each side of the House, in two of the political parties, who won't be returning.

I must say, one of my favourite times in this chamber is when we talk about the positive attributes of our colleagues past, present and sometimes even in the future. I think tonight will be a very important night. I know that the parliamentary assistant to the Premier, whom I hold in high regard, Mr. David Ramsay, will be paid tribute to this evening, and I wanted to ensure that we were able to send him properly from this place.

This is a bill that my colleague from Halton, who spoke earlier, has grave concerns about—not so much the content but I think more the motive. And when you start to question the motive and why it has appeared both at this particular time and why it has appeared—we are going through a period right now of time allocation, and we question the motive, particularly not just at the end of this legislative session but also right before an election. That's why we have challenges.

One of the other frustrating parts about this piece of legislation, as my colleague from Halton will well tell you, is that the Ontario Progressive Conservative caucus, through our colleague from Wellington—Halton Hills, put forward a similar piece of legislation that we believe could have augmented and benefited this legislation and that would have avoided or prevented or made it illegal for collusion to occur in Ontario elections.

As my colleague from the New Democratic Party, from the third party, so aptly said, this could have been done three years ago. There should have been all-party buy-in. It appeared at a time after the government House leader and the Premier both suggested that there would not be any further legislation put forward, and it came, of course, a day after my colleague from Wellington—Halton Hills put forward his ban on colluding between Working Families and the Ontario Liberal Party.

So you're left to wonder now not just about the timing of the motive, but also the motive and: Why only ban dirty tricks that they don't want to engage in? Because, again, we on this side of the House feel that a dirty trick during an election is allowing a third party to collude with a major political party to put forward at least \$10 million in campaign ads.

1700

Let me talk a little bit about what would have improved this piece of legislation.

Ted Arnott put forward the Banning Collusion in Electoral Advertising Act so that he could ensure that political parties were not allowed to circumvent the

election spending limits by colluding with a third party, as I've said.

In the last two Ontario elections, the Working Families Coalition, who I'll talk about a little bit more, spent millions of dollars attacking Ontario Progressive Conservative candidates and our leaders, to the direct benefit of Dalton McGuinty and the Ontario Liberal Party.

The Chief Electoral Officer himself has called for legislative changes to third party advertising laws. He suggested that that be considered, noting that the Ontario election laws do not specifically ban collusion between political parties and third parties. When the Chief Electoral Officer suggested that, that would have been an appropriate time for this type of bill to also research and study and enforce bans. That's also why in Changebook our leader, Tim Hudak, will include a law, once we form government, to ban collusion.

We have serious concerns with the motive, both in time and why some dirty tricks are included and others aren't. Let me tell you why. One is, we know that the former head of the Liberal campaign—and I believe he is the head of the Liberal campaign again—Don Guy, is running research for Pollara, and he's doing polling for the provincial Liberal Party as well as for the Ontario Working Families Coalition.

There's another name: Marcel Wieder. Marcel would have been doing advertising for the Working Families Coalition at the same time he was working with the Ontario Liberal Party.

Finally, there is Pat Dillon, the de facto head of the Ontario Working Families Coalition, who has been working not only with union leaders but also with the Liberals—because he receives great appointments. We know, for example, from documents obtained through a court process—as you know, Speaker, our party took the Working Families Coalition to court. We know there has been collusion on things like ads, scripts and polling, and that's all been shared between the Ontario Liberal Party and the Working Families Coalition. That does not set a level playing field for—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I ask the member for Peterborough, who is not in his seat, to come to order.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The reality is, you can't put forward a bill like this and not talk about a level playing field. This is dirty pool, in our view, and that's why we requested at the time an inquiry by the elections officer. That's why we launched a legal battle with Working Families, and that's why we put forward a piece of legislation in this House.

Don't take my word for it. I'll go through some of the points that I think are extremely relevant here.

Greg Essensa, the Chief Electoral Officer, at the Select Committee on Elections, said on May 7, 2009, "The fourth public policy area for consideration is, should Ontario adopt stricter registration and anti-collusion provisions? Under the Election Finances Act, there is no specific provision that prohibits a third party from co-

operating or coordinating its advertising with either a political party or one of its candidates, provided that the party/candidate is not actually controlling the third party's advertising."

The Torys report, which was commissioned by Elections Ontario, said this: "The third party advertising regime is new to Ontario. The first election under that regime disclosed a number of rough edges, particularly in circumstances where there is potential for conflicts of interest/collusion between registered parties and third parties."

There you have it. We have not only Greg Essensa, the Chief Electoral Officer, but also Torys law firm, which reported to Elections Ontario on collusion, calling for clarity on these election laws.

That's why the question is—and I think my colleague from Welland actually pointed it out quite well: Why do you have a respected Chief Electoral Officer and a respected law firm like Torys calling for changes to the electoral system in Ontario being ignored while, at the same time, this bill is based on innuendo and rumour and front page headlines, without any consultation with the two other major political parties nor with the public? That's why, of course, we agree with them: There should be public hearings. But that did not occur.

I'd like to point out that this is not new, this Working Families Coalition. I think it has been raised several times, most notably by a journalist here at Queen's Park, Christina Blizzard with the Toronto—and Ottawa, I might add—Sun. She pointed out that it was very interesting that this Working Families Coalition had the ability to run ads on the evening of the Oscars. Of course, as she says, "You don't buy a spot during the Oscars with chopped liver. This is a well-heeled, well-organized group....."

"In 2003, Liberal backroom operative"—as I mentioned—"Marcel Wieder was behind the Working Families' nasty negative ad that attacked then-Premier Ernie Eves, proclaiming, 'Not this time, Ernie'"—again, a well-heeled, well-organized group.

That's why we question the motive of this legislation. That's why we question why the government would ignore collusion, but they would follow the innuendo of other things that are picked in the paper. That's why we continue to question the Liberals on this piece of legislation.

She goes on to say, and I'm going to read from Ms. Blizzard, "The PC Party made a formal complaint to Elections Ontario after the 2007 election"—which I just told you about. "In 2009, the Chief Electoral Officer wound up the probe," finding "no apparent contravention of the law."

"There are very few rules about third party advertising."

"Third party election advertising is not subject to spending" rules.

"Third parties are not required to register with Elections Ontario if they advertise outside the writ period."

"If our election finance laws have loopholes ... isn't it time to take a second look?"

When you know that respected people and those who advocate for more electoral strength in Ontario who have studied this matter and who are experts are suggesting there is a loophole, why would this government not want to close that loophole, unless it were to directly benefit them? That is the motive of why they will not close that loophole, and that is the motive of why that change is not contained in this piece of legislation.

I must say that is quite disturbing because, as I have said on several occasions, the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party put forward, through our colleague from Wellington-Halton Hills, Ted Arnott, a strong piece of legislation that would have banned collusion between third party groups and political parties during a writ period and even beyond that. They chose to vote against it, and that's why we have serious concerns.

Let me tell you a little bit more about the Working Families Coalition. The 2007 version of the Working Families Coalition was an initiative of the provincial building trades and a group of labour unions primarily comprised of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association; the Canadian Auto Workers; the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation; International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Local 128; International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; millwrights; International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 793; painters district council 46; and the Ontario Pipe Trades Council.

In 2003 Marcel Wieder, of Arrow Communications, Pollara and Now Communications, created and coordinated the coalition's advertising and research strategy. According to a June 15, 2007, column in the Toronto Star by Ian Urquhart, Arrow Communications was rehired in 2007, and discussions took place regarding Pollara reprising its role for the campaign.

1710

The goal of the Working Families Coalition is to run a series of negative attack ads, primarily through television, for the purpose of defeating the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party—and there are no rules.

The Liberals should be ashamed. They should be ashamed that they are using an obscure loophole to get themselves elected—so that they can do nothing but reshape the political system here in Ontario in an unfair, un-level playing field. When they take a piece of legislation like the one before us to this chamber, they do themselves no favours, because all they're proving to the people of Ontario is that they're willing to cheat to get to win this—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I'll ask you to withdraw that.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I withdraw, and I will also rephrase this.

They will to go any length in order to keep power in Ontario—that they would work with the Working Families Coalition to spend \$10 million on attack ads against the leader of the Ontario Progressive Conservatives and then all of these other caucus colleagues of mine, includ-

ing the member from Wellington–Halton Hills, whose wife’s own union dues are being used against her husband, against her will. That’s why Changebook will do two things. It will ban collusion so that these Liberals won’t be able to use the rules against Ontario families. And it will do another thing: It will allow those who are unionized to have a choice of whether or not they put money into political parties.

I’ve got to tell you something. Last week, we were in our constituencies. It was a great week. I spent some time volunteering at my daughter’s library, which I think is on the chopping block, thanks to this Liberal government, if I look at what’s happening in Windsor. I spent some time there, selling school books and selling used books for a fundraiser—because, as we know, under Dalton McGuinty’s Ontario, we don’t spend money on curriculum anymore. That’s what the parent council’s job is. I had a teacher come up to me and she said, “Ms. MacLeod, may I speak to you?” I said, “Yes, I’d be happy to talk to you.” She said, “You know, I normally don’t agree with you. I’m a Liberal. But what you said recently really resonated with me. I agree with you, and I’m going to vote for you.” I asked, “What was the issue?” She said, “Using my union dues to vote against a student of mine.” She didn’t appreciate it. Nobody appreciates what you’re doing.

I can assure you, there will be a backlash that will take place from Ottawa to Owen Sound on election day, when the people of this province decide to stand up for Ontario families, when they decide to stand up for the taxpayers in this province, when they decide to stand up for seniors, when they know what is real, when they know what they need—not what they’ve been told, not what they’ve been promised by an out-of-touch, out-of-gas McGuinty Liberal government.

So I implore, in this House today, this Ontario Liberal government to do the right thing.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Order.

The member for Nepean–Carleton.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: This gives me an opportunity to remind this Legislature that on the numerous occasions when I have raised the Working Families Coalition and the collusion occurring with the Ontario Liberal Party, not once in this Legislature has Premier McGuinty denied that collusion has occurred. Not once has he looked in his face, right across from me, and said to this Legislature, to the Ontario PC Party, to the Ontario public, that there is no collusion between the Working Families Coalition and the Ontario Liberal Party. We know that, between Marcel Wieder, Don Guy and Patrick Dillon, the Ontario Liberal Party will spend what they have against the Ontario PC Party, and they will also use their friends in the Working Families Coalition to do their dirty work.

All we were asking, and all my colleague from Wellington–Halton Hills was asking, was for them to do the right thing—close the loophole; bring integrity into your own piece of legislation—but they chose not to.

It’s incredible. They had an opportunity here to discuss this piece of legislation one last time. We’re here for two and a half more days. This Legislature is led by the Ontario Liberal Party right now, and they refuse to defend their own piece of legislation, as my colleague from Welland said.

They have the right to do whatever they want while they’re still here. They have two and a half days.

Interjection.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: My colleague from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington—the longest riding ever—is right: They aren’t going to be here a long time, and let me tell you why: because the hard-working people of Ontario realize that this government will say and do anything, and once it’s elected, it changes its mind. They know that they will go to any lengths to cling to power; they know that they will say and do anything, too, and then change their minds. Whether they mean to or they’re just so incompetent, I don’t know, but the reality is that the people of Ontario want change, and they will find it in Changebook. Changebook actually identifies areas where it makes politics more level, more fair in Ontario. This bill does not.

In fact, when they put forward this bill, they also put forward a motion, and once they put forward their motion, they actually blamed Stephen Harper, when three days beforehand they compared Prime Minister Harper to Dalton McGuinty. And do you know what they did right after that? They called the Prime Minister of Canada corrupt. I can’t get over this, because these are the types of dirty tricks—and anything that they’ll say to try and stay in power—and they won’t, because I’m going to tell you, we’ve got members—we’ve got the member from Simcoe–Grey—who are going to travel this province and who are going to continue to talk to people. We’re going to bring our message of change. We’ve got my colleague from Wellington–Halton Hills. We’ve got my colleague from Thornhill, who, by the way, knows more about the environment and more about the economy than Bernie Farber does. I’ve got my colleague from Sarnia, who is going to stand up for the people in Sarnia, and I’ve got my colleague from Haldimand–Norfolk, who has been working hard for his constituents. We’re going to work with our colleague from Simcoe–Grey, and we’re going to go across this province. We’re going to go into these Liberal ridings. We’re going to let people know that change is here. We’re going to let them know that Tim Hudak is on their side. We’re going to let them know that the Working Families Coalition is trying to break electoral laws. We’re going to continue to fight for the people on the issues that really matter for them.

I have to say, in this last minute that I have, that I’m disappointed in the tone of this debate, because the reality is that the Liberals have chosen not to debate this piece of legislation with the opposition. They have instead decided that they’re going to give each political party—rather than the normal rotations to debate an idea and make legislation better, they’re going to ram it through this Legislature. They’re not going to speak to

the legislation, and this is going to be what we see: utter disrespect and disregard not only for this chamber but for the people who have sent us here to represent them.

I have to tell you, I will continue to push with my colleagues and our leader, Tim Hudak, for stronger electoral laws in this province. We will continue to push for a better Ontario, and we will continue to push right through to October 6 to earn the vote and respect of Ontario people, and I know we're going to do it, because right now they have been so badly let down by this out-of-touch, out-of-gas Liberal government that they want change, and I can assure you that change is ahead.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

M^{me} France Gélinas: We have before us Bill 196, An Act to amend the Election Act with respect to certain electoral practices.

I must say that it looks like this bill was brought forward to this Legislative Assembly based on reports of—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): I'd just ask members, if they have conversations, to take them out of the chamber and to listen to the member from Nickel Belt.

M^{me} France Gélinas: It looks like this bill was brought forward based on reports of potential fraud during the last federal election, so the government has introduced changes to the Ontario Election Act that would make it illegal—with a fine of up to \$25,000 and two years less one day in prison for different offences. There are four of them.

The first offence is to impede or attempt to stop a citizen from voting by providing false information, directly or indirectly, such as providing them with the incorrect polling station where they should be voting in a provincial election; second, to impersonate or ask someone to impersonate an election official, an employee of Elections Ontario, a provincial candidate or a representative of a candidate, political party or constituency association—so, no impersonation; third, to direct or hire someone or a company to commit the above offences; and fourth, the penalty for existing offences under the Election Act, such as voting twice or providing false residency information, would also increase from a maximum fine of \$5,000 to up to \$25,000 and two years less a day in jail.

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This is the bill we have in front of us. Here again, we're discussing a bill that was brought forward because of alleged voter interference. We don't know if there was because Elections Canada is doing its investigation, but we have this bill that came in at the eleventh hour dealing with this. What's worse is that we have a motion—what is called in this House a time allocation motion—that will not allow the citizens of Ontario to take part in this debate. If the citizens of Ontario were given a chance to come and take part in a public debate—coming back to the title of the act, An Act to amend the Election Act with respect to certain electoral practices, the Ensuring

Integrity in Ontario Elections Act. There are many things that people would like to see changed when it comes to the Ensuring Integrity in Ontario Elections Act, but none of them are in the bill, none of them are part of Bill 196, and nobody will be allowed to voice their opinions, nobody will be allowed to take part in this debate, because it has been time-allocated.

So what happened? We had a notice of motion, and a member from the Liberal Party stood and said:

"Pursuant to standing order 47 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 196, An Act to amend the Election Act with respect to certain electoral practices, when Bill 196 is next called as a government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill"—and here comes the crunch—"without further debate or amendment, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading, which order may then be immediately called; and

"That, when the order for third reading is called, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment"

So what have they done? They have rushed in a piece of legislation. Let's face it: They have been in power for eight years. We've had an election. The last election was three and a half years ago, almost four years ago. If they wanted to bring integrity to the Ontario Election Act, they would have had a lot of time to do this. The prime motivator is this alleged misconduct that took place during the federal election on May 2, and we have this half-cooked, half-baked piece of legislation in front of us that nobody will have an opportunity to talk about.

There are many things in the Election Act that we would like to see changed, there are many electoral practices that people would like to see changed, and here we have an opportunity. This piece of legislation is open. Let's open it up to the public so that we can hear what they'd like to see.

If we look in my riding of Nickel Belt, we will see that, first of all, the voters' lists are horrible, just horrible. If you go to any of the First Nations communities in Nickel Belt with a voters' list, you might as well leave it in your car. This is how useful this thing is going to be: None of the names are correct, none of the addresses are correct and none of the street names are correct. We're not talking about missing an odd "S" or an "E" or something. The names of the streets are not correct, the numbering makes no sense, and the names of the people: "Well, they haven't lived in this community we don't know for how long, but anyway, it's pretty well useless."

If you go in other areas of Nickel Belt, you will find similar problems. One of the major problems is that you get on the street and half of the house numbers are not on your list, and then you have all of those numbers that have never been on that street before. If you manage to get a house number on the right street with a name attached to it, you will knock on the door and somebody will come and talk to you. Then you look at your list and

you see that Marie and Jim and Peter live at this address, so you thank Marie for her support and you ask about Jim. "Well, you know, Jim is deceased." You offer your condolences and she says, "Well, he has been deceased for nine years." But his name is still on the list. It's the same thing with a whole bunch of people who are supposed to live at this address who have never lived there. It's just a mess.

But none of those people will have an opportunity to come and talk. No public input will be allowed. We have this very, very narrowly focused bill, and I would say that a lot of people would like to see the bill, the Ensuring Integrity in Ontario Elections Act. I think that's something people would like.

The name of the bill is good enough. It's what's in the bill that's kind of insufficient. Let me read to you some of the press releases that came out after this bill came out. It goes as such: "The provincial government's latest initiative makes me kind of embarrassed for society as a whole." I'm quoting.

"Have we really got to the point that we need legislation to ensure people don't screw around with elections, and with each other's ability to participate in them?"

The writer goes on to say, "Apparently so."

"Earlier this week, Attorney General ... introduced Bill 196, the so-called 'Ensuring Integrity in Ontario Elections Act.'" He put that in brackets because I don't think he believes in it, but this is the name of the bill, so we have to use it.

"The legislation, which the Liberals are trying to rush through before the Ontario Legislature adjourns for its very long summer break on June 2, is aimed at curbing, at the provincial level, some of the dirty tricks which marked the recent federal election.

"The act would specifically make it illegal to prevent someone else from participating in a vote, to impede such voting or to impersonate a federal or provincial elections official.

"It would also increase the maximum penalties for election fraud from the current six months in jail and a \$5,000 fine to two years in jail and a \$25,000 fine."

It goes on to say, "We heard loud and clear about the allegations during the recent federal election and thought our law should contain the appropriate protections"—he's quoting the minister, who was trying to defend the act.

The minister himself said, "We heard loud and clear about the allegations." Somehow, a sentence that says you hear loud and clear but you hear allegations—they don't mix together in the same sentence so well with me. It's either an allegation or it is loud and clear.

But anyway, "These allegations included automated telephone calls to voters in select centres ... wrongly informing voters their polling station had been changed to one across town, apparently aimed at frustrating voters and preventing them from casting their ballots.

"Elections Canada is ... investigating these calls...."

He goes on to say that the minister's bill "is not a panacea for shady campaigning, and those engaged in the

business of winning elections will continue to find a way to give themselves, and their chosen candidates, an edge."

So although the bill is very narrow even in the part that it tries to address, this writer, anyway, didn't think that it was going to hit the mark, and I must say that I would agree.

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It would have been very worthwhile to have an exercise where, after second reading this bill, would have been referred to a committee, and the committee would have had public hearings. Another concern that I think we would have heard is from people living with disabilities. People living with disabilities often have a tough time going to their polling station.

Here again, I can talk about my riding in Nickel Belt, in a little community called Coniston, where the polling station is not wheelchair accessible. It actually has a steep set of stairs to go down to the polling station. So what do people do?

I can tell you that on May 2, the weather in Nickel Belt was the pits. There's no other way to describe it. When it was not raining, we had hurricane winds, and it was cold—cold enough to freeze your feet, your hands, your nose, your ears. You're campaigning with a scarf and a toque on, and that's on May 2. By the way, the weather hasn't improved much since that time.

Mr. Rick Johnson: That's a federal responsibility.

M^{me} France Gélinas: My colleague says that the weather is with the federal government. I haven't got much hope that it will improve anytime soon.

But coming back to the act, to Bill 196, there are some changes that people want to see. One of those changes has to do with people with disabilities. Basically, a person with a disability has to stand outside until an able body goes by, goes down the stairs and tells the clerk at the polling station that there is somebody in a wheelchair waiting outside. The clerk goes up, talks to the person, gets their name and then gets their ballot. All of this gets to be done in the pouring rain, with hurricane winds going by—not exactly very friendly to people with disabilities.

My riding is no different from any other riding. There are lots of polling stations throughout this province where people with disabilities simply cannot make it in because the building is not accessible. I must say that we have made improvements in the choice of polling stations. As well, some of the traditional polling stations have done renovations so that they are wheelchair accessible, basically because of their other functions through the years, and this has made it easier. But there are still some. Had we had an opportunity for public hearings, we could have had an opportunity to hear about all of those people.

An election is something that is important to the people of Ontario. It certainly is important to the people in this House, as we want them to have integrity, but when we see what's contained in this bill—and by the way, this is the bill. If you take out the title, it is really

one page. Do you figure we could do better when we're talking about integrity? Do you figure that if we're going to open up this bill, we could at least talk about some of the issues that have to do with integrity?

When a voter goes and the voters' list—remember, not only is the voters' list used for campaigning; it's also used for people who actually make it to the polls. When you make it to the poll and you are not on the list, right off the bat, you know it is going to be a 20-minute process. If you had planned on voting on your way to work or, God forbid, you went to vote on the bus in Nickel Belt where I live—the bus comes every four hours. It comes once in morning, once at lunchtime, and once at suppertime. So if you've gone, and you want to catch the bus back to where you live, a 20-minute delay there may mean that you will be stuck there for four hours until the next bus comes—in the parts of Nickel Belt where there is a bus.

So are there issues about integrity? Absolutely. Are we going to solve them with Bill 196? Well, Bill 196 takes a stab at allegations, but it seems to be completely oblivious to the reality that we need changes, that there are problems happening right here and now that could be addressed by this Legislative Assembly, that could be improved—something that we could all agree on.

We all want our political process to have integrity, but yet there is no appetite to hear from the people. There is no justification as to why we cannot take a day to hear from the people of Ontario. We're not asking for the moon. I'm not asking that you travel to Nickel Belt or anything like that. We're asking for a few hours right here in downtown Toronto for people who have faced issues that deal directly with what the bill addresses, issues of integrity of the Ontario electoral process, and yet they won't have an opportunity to be heard.

I don't understand why things like this are being done. It is not a controversial issue. Integrity is something that—isn't this an apple pie type of a thing? We are politicians. We want our political process to have integrity. You have opened up the act. Isn't this a good time to do a little bit of dusting up? Not only should we go after allegations that are yet to be proven, but how about we deal with the real problems that have been found so that when the election results come out, we are all positive that what we see as an election result is what the people of Ontario wanted? The electoral process is the best process that we have, but if people start to doubt it, then it's all for nothing. So I would like the government to change their way, to allow for one day, even one night, of public hearings. People have lots to say.

I realize that we just went through a federal election, but the processes are not that far apart, not that different. The problems they encountered with the last election on May 2 could be fixed, problems that they encountered that have everything to do with the integrity of the act, and, to me, the integrity of the political process is directly linked with the integrity of the voters' list. When we have election lists that are as terrible as what we have in Nickel Belt—and I'm sure I'm not the only riding—then

we have to do better than this. We have to give people an opportunity to be heard so that we do it right.

Il me fait plaisir de rajouter ces quelques mots au projet de loi 196, Loi modifiant la Loi électorale en ce qui concerne certaines manœuvres électorales. Le projet de loi 196 est un projet de loi qui a été mis de l'avant par le gouvernement libéral suite à des allégations de procédures qui n'ont pas été suivies et d'actes qui pourraient être classés comme illégaux. Le projet de loi sert à modifier la Loi électorale, dans un premier temps, en augmentant les amendes pour des manœuvres frauduleuses. Donc, en ce moment, on a une amende jusqu'à 5 000 \$. Cette amende-là serait augmentée à 25 000 \$ avec la possibilité d'emprisonnement d'une durée de deux ans moins un jour. Les gens qui font semblant d'être quelqu'un d'autre, soit un candidat ou un membre de son équipe ou un membre d'un parti, auraient, eux aussi, commis un acte illégal selon la Loi électorale et pourraient faire face à des pénalités soit fiscales—une amende d'au plus de 25 000 \$—ou encore là d'un emprisonnement.

On parle ici de votes irréguliers, soit enregistrés par bulletin de vote spécial. On parle ici d'erreurs délibérées dans le compte des suffrages. On parle de l'ingérence dans l'exercice du vote. Ça veut dire, entre autres, dire à quelqu'un de se rendre à un poll où est-ce que vraiment on leur donne la même adresse. On parle également d'usurpation de qualité. Ça, c'est lorsque tu fais croire que tu es quelqu'un d'autre au téléphone ou d'une autre façon, et d'autres manœuvres frauduleuses.

C'est un projet de loi qu'on met de l'avant parce qu'on a entendu des rumeurs que certaines choses ont mal été. Par contre, il y en a d'autres problèmes face à l'intégrité du processus électoral que l'on connaît, telles des listes électorales incomplètes, telles des stations de vote où les gens avec une infirmité ne peuvent pas se rendre, et j'ai donné des exemples dans mon comté.

Donc, on aurait besoin d'audiences publiques. Malheureusement, ce gouvernement-là a voté contre.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate?

Ms. Smith has moved government notice of motion number 81. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion say "aye."

All those opposed to the motion say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

Mr. Jeff Leal: Madam Speaker, I think I can help you out of this dilemma.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Pursuant to standing order 28(h), the vote on government notice of motion 81 will be deferred until deferred votes.

Vote deferred.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Orders of the day?

Hon. Rick Bartolucci: I move adjournment of the House until 6:45.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Mr. Peter Kormos: On division.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): On division.

This House stands recessed until 6:45 of the clock.

The House recessed from 1742 to 1845.

Evening meeting reported in volume B.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Steve Peters

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman, Tonia Grannum

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Aggelonitis, Hon. / L'hon. Sophia (LIB)	Hamilton Mountain	Minister of Revenue / Ministre du Revenu Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Arthurs, Wayne (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (LIB)	London West / London-Ouest	Attorney General / Procureur général Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Health Promotion and Sport / Ministre de la Promotion de la santé et du Sport
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Brown, Michael A. (LIB)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Brownell, Jim (LIB)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Caplan, David (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Carroll, Hon. / L'hon. Aileen (LIB)	Barrie	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism and Culture / Ministre du Tourisme et de la Culture
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Craiton, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Crozier, Bruce (LIB)	Essex	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (LIB)	Prince Edward–Hastings	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (LIB)	Windsor–Tecumseh	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry / Ministre du Développement du Nord, des Mines et des Forêts
Hampton, Howard (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Hoy, Pat (LIB)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Johnson, Rick (LIB)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kormos, Peter (NDP)	Welland	Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
Kular, Kuldip (LIB)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Jean-Marc (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Leal, Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	
Levac, Dave (LIB)	Brant	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Cambridge	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Premier / Premier ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
McMeekin, Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	
Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Mitchell, Hon. / L'hon. Carol (LIB)	Huron–Bruce	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Moridi, Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
Naqvi, Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
Oraziotti, David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pendergast, Leeanna (LIB)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (LIB)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (LIB)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Economic Development and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Ramal, Khalil (LIB)	London–Fanshawe	
Ramsay, David (LIB)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Ruprecht, Tony (LIB)	Davenport	
Sandals, Liz (LIB)	Guelph	
Savoline, Joyce (PC)	Burlington	
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Monique M. (LIB)	Nipissing	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
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Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Sterling, Norman W. (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	Deputy Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de parti reconnu
Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Van Bommel, Maria (LIB)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
Wilkinson, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Perth–Wellington	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Zimmer, David (LIB)	Willowdale	
Vacant	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	

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Garfield Dunlop, Phil McNeely
Yasir Naqvi, John O'Toole
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Bob Delaney, Kevin Daniel Flynn
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Amrit Mangat, Rosario Marchese
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Maria Van Bommel
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France Gélinas, Jerry J. Ouellette
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Shafiq Qaadri, Khalil Ramal
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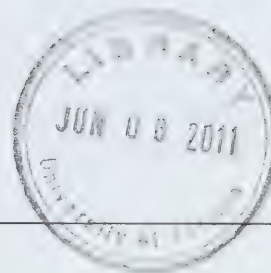
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Second Session, 39th Parliament

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 39^e législature

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Tuesday 31 May 2011

Mardi 31 mai 2011

Speaker
Honourable Steve Peters

Président
L'honorable Steve Peters

Clerk
Deborah Deller

Greffière
Deborah Deller

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 31 May 2011

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 31 mai 2011

The House recessed from 1742 to 1845.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I believe we have unanimous consent that this evening's meeting be set aside for tributes to members not seeking re-election, according to the following arrangements: For each tribute, one member from each recognized party may speak for up to two minutes, followed by a reply from the member for up to five minutes. At the end of all the tributes, the Speaker shall, without motion, immediately adjourn the House.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Agreed? Agreed.

MEMBER FOR CARLETON—MISSISSIPPI MILLS

Mr. John Yakabuski: I'm pleased to lead this off. It's not very often that you get to honour and pay tribute to someone who has served this Legislature and their province with such distinction for 34 years. I'm honoured to be speaking on behalf of the PC caucus today for my colleague, a mentor and a friend, Norm Sterling.

I can tell you, folks, that I wouldn't be here today if it wasn't for Norm Sterling. Many years ago, before I did run for this office, Norm encouraged me to do so. To make a long story short, we didn't think the time was right. When the time was right, Norm was the first one to call and say, "Johnny, I think you've got to go." I heeded his advice, and I did just that. But that wasn't the end of Norm's support for me. He visited my riding three times during that election, an election that was not going well for us, and at his personal risk in his own riding, he came to my riding three times.

When I was successful, he then made my job that much easier. I was wondering what I was going to do for staff, and he said, "Why don't you talk to Mary-Frances and Joan?", Joan being his wife and Mary-Frances being Mary-Frances Dulny, who both worked with me for several years in that office and gave a leg up on many of the rookies like myself. I say to you, Norm: Thank you for what you did for me. You made me a better MPP with the support you gave.

Norm won nine elections in four different ridings. He started out in Carleton—Grenville, then the ridings of Carleton and Lanark—Carleton and, currently, his riding

of Carleton—Mississippi Mills—four different ridings having to get your message out and appeal to a different constituency so many different times. It says something about the work that Norm Sterling did.

In his time here in this House, serving on all sides of the House, in government, in opposition and even in the third party, when his party was reduced to third party status in 1987 until 1995—during his time here, he served nine ministries in a tremendously distinguished way, improving the lives of Ontario families in the process.

I know I don't have a lot of time here and I know I've already exceeded it, but I want to say to you, Norm, on behalf of Tim Hudak, the Progressive Conservative caucus, all of your constituents, all of the members of this House and indeed on behalf of every citizen of this province of Ontario: Thank you for the service that you have given us, and thank you to your family, who are all here gathered today, for lending you to us.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Do we have unanimous consent to use the member's name, or do I have to say "Carleton—Mississippi Mills"—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Perhaps I should have started in the beginning: Welcome to all the family and friends who are here tonight.

We can restart the clock. Some of the rules that normally apply in the chamber, the Speaker will forgo this evening, including the use of names and the lack of riding names.

To all the guests who are here, feel free to applaud. It isn't always the case, but tonight is a very special night.

The member from Nickel Belt.

Applause.

1850

M^{me} France Gélinas: That clapping was for you, Norm, not for me.

It is my pleasure to say a few words. I must say that it was really intimidating to meet Norm. I was assigned to the committee for public accounts, so I looked him up a little bit, "Here's the Chair of public accounts," and then you read the pedigree of this man: He has been in office forever, has won nine elections, has been minister for pretty well every portfolio; and I'm thinking, "Oh my God, this is not going to be good."

I go to my first public accounts meeting. I have read everything. It was all the opposite. Norm was Chair, and he wanted the work of public accounts to serve the public good. He wanted to hear from each and every one of us around the table to make sure that whatever had been

presented—it didn't matter which ministry or which program we were reviewing—he wanted to make sure that the people of Ontario got value for the money spent and that if there was a way to improve, then every idea was good and everybody was allowed to speak. It didn't matter that I had no experience and he knew it all; he valued the input of everybody around the table.

I've learned lots about public accounts and I've learned lots about how a committee of this House can and should be run by the expertise and the experience that he brought to the job.

It was a pleasure to serve on public accounts under the presidency of Norm Sterling. He brought to the job a way of doing things that you don't see very often in this House. It was refreshing and it was especially very conducive to doing good work.

It was a pleasure to work with you, and it has been too short.

Hon. James J. Bradley: It's a distinct honour for me to pay tribute this evening to a man who was once referred to by Sean Conway as the squire of Manotick.

Here's an individual, Norm Sterling, who was responsible for the Niagara Escarpment plan, an enduring legacy for him. I can think of his anti-smoking legislation that he brought forward to protect the health of people in the workplace.

His initiatives in legislative reform will endure for many years and through many Parliaments.

His chairmanship of the public accounts committee—and we hear his reports on almost a daily basis—is something that we should all be proud of, all members of this House, because he has done an outstanding job in that regard.

He was one who has recognized, unlike so many on the North American scene in politics today, that it's not the volume of one's voice or the sarcasm or insult that is used that counts; rather, it is the logic of the argument and the level of articulation that wins the day, and he deserves credit for that.

Norm has made an immense, constructive contribution to the deliberations of this House and its committees. He has brought intelligence, good judgment and goodwill. He has conducted himself at all times with dignity, with grace and with good humour.

The people of the riding of Carleton-Mississippi Mills, the people of Ontario and those of us who have the privilege of serving with Norm Sterling in this House are fortunate to have had him with us for some 34 years. We will miss him immensely, and we all wish Norm and Joan well.

We are losing Norm from this House, and as I say, it will be an immense loss, because not many people come along of this ilk to serve in this assembly. He's a person I've always looked to with a good deal of envy because he is so articulate, is so full of grace, is a person who conducts himself so well in this Legislature.

We all wish him well. Who knows? There is a heaven, perhaps, for those who serve in the Ontario Legislature. I have heard that it starts with an "S" and ends with an

"E"; it's a six-letter word that you should consult Bob Runciman about, because there may well be a future for Senator Norm Sterling.

Norm, you're a very close friend. You were, when you first came here, a close friend of mine; you will be for a lifetime. I wish you well.

Mr. Norman W. Sterling: As you can imagine, this is a bit of an emotional time for somebody who has spent 34 years here. I know that the official time is five minutes, but I understand that a member gets a minute for each year that he has served here.

I want to thank Premier McGuinty for being here tonight. Thank you very much for attending what I consider a very, very important part of our legislative process, something that is new to the legislative process. I think this is the first time, because we have a fixed election date. The last time, before 2007, it didn't occur.

One of the traits I hope that I leave with the Legislature is that members of this Legislature have a concern about the institution and that they defend that institution going forward. The institution of the Legislature is very, very important, and unless we protect it—the practices, the rules, the accountability argument—we are all in trouble and the people of Ontario are in trouble.

I want to thank all of the people of the four different ridings or constituencies that I've represented over the last 34 years. It has been a wonderful experience. I have been so lucky to have been elected and to have sustained that plurality, to be able to elect people, for nine consecutive elections. I lost my first nomination meeting in 1971 to Sid Handleman. I lost my last nomination meeting in this year, and I'm proud to say that my constituents have never said no to Norm Sterling.

Notwithstanding that I have spent a great deal of my time here in the city of Toronto, one of the things that happens to you when you serve as long as I have—I was talking to Bob Runciman last night—is you become a citizen of two areas. You become a citizen of the city of Ottawa, or eastern Ontario, and a citizen of the city of Toronto. So for Joan and I—my wife, Joan, who's sitting in the gallery up here and who has served in this Legislature as a legislative assistant to Al Palladini and to my friend John Yakabuski and probably was one of the best assistants that anyone could imagine. I could name a dozen guys on the other side of the floor who would attest to that, too. I know Rick is holding up his hand.

I am also very, very happy that, during that period of time, even though I was away from my family for undue lengths of time, I have a beautiful, beautiful family. My son Ian and my two granddaughters Tierney and Hillary Doris are here. Stand up, kids. My son Ian, who's sitting between them, doesn't want to stand up because I'm taller than him. Ian is a wonderful father and a very, very successful businessman as well. Also, there is my daughter, Sara, and her husband, Normand Robert, and their two children, Sam and Madeleine. As I say, Mr. Speaker, we could do all we want in life, whether we're in here or we're in another occupation, but our family, of course, is the final word.

1900

I have been blessed with a whole number of staff who have been with me for long, long periods of time during that 34-year period, and they have remained very, very loyal to me. I have in my office here Lesley Daw, who has been with me for 10 years. I have Jay Brennan, who has been with me for 15 years. I have Jackie Kearney, who has been with me for 21 years. All of these people, who are sitting up in the east lobby, have done wonderful work for me. But up in that section of the east lobby are all my friends—not all my friends, I hope—my closest friends, both from Toronto, John and Flo Pappain and Peter and Betsy Partington. Peter was an MPP from 1985 to 1987, and my friendship with him has lasted since that time. Elizabeth McGregor and Sasha Woodbridge—I can go on and on in terms of those people, but they're all here tonight to celebrate the end of this part of my career.

I was so lucky to come here in 1977 and immediately be made parliamentary secretary to Roy McMurtry, who was then the Attorney General. I worked with him to pass some of the most innovative, exciting law reform that this province has ever seen. During the period from 1977 to 1981, I think the Ministry of the Attorney General had something like 35 different pieces of legislation. And they weren't little bits of legislation; they were legislation like the first provincial offences act and the first family law reform act, which brought together all the common law with regard to family law.

After the 1981 election, I was made minister without portfolio for a short period of time and given responsibility for freedom-of-information and privacy laws. It was the first time I had been given that kind of responsibility, but I found out that most people like accountability for everybody but themselves. As I went from ministry to ministry, everybody would say, "Yes, I think the government needs this, but not for our ministry. We're a special case." So it was the first lesson I had in terms of accountability.

Perhaps the most important work I did during the period of time in Bill Davis's cabinet from 1981 to 1985 was on the Niagara Escarpment plan. Quite frankly, the ministers who preceded me who were responsible for that particular portfolio had let it fall, and they were willing to abandon it. I picked it up, I gathered strength and, together with David Peterson in the early days of his mandate, I actually worked with the brand new Liberal government to see the Niagara Escarpment plan brought into law in June of 1985. That was a plan that had been there and in the making for 15 years, and I know that probably would not have happened had I not been given that opportunity. So I take great pleasure and pride in that.

As well, all MPPs should not be interested only in what the immediate issue of the day is, and so in 1983, I said that I was absolutely determined that we would have an entrance from the 401 to the city of Ottawa along what is now Highway 416. Local politicians—provincial politicians of my party—had lost the vision in completing that particular project. So I went to then-minister Jim

Snow and said, "Jim, we have to get this thing going. If we don't get it going now, it will never happen, because entrances to the city of Ottawa are closing down on us." It took from 1983 until about 2000 for the project to be completed. But politicians must not think only about what is going to garner votes that day; they must think about their community in the long term. I'm so proud of the fact that I picked it up, got it going and it came to fruition.

We get opportunities when we become ministers. But when we are in opposition, we also have opportunities, but we have to make them. In December 1985, when we were in opposition, I brought forward the first piece of legislation in our country of Canada, provincially or nationally, to stop smoking in the workplace and in public places. It was not a popular thing to do in those days—we're talking 25 years ago, Mr. Speaker. But I persisted and persisted, as I was in opposition—Jim would know that—and finally in 1989, after seven private member's bills, hundreds of thousands of petitions and questions in the Legislature, the government came to its senses and brought forward a piece of legislation.

After that, I enjoyed working with the NDP government on bringing forward the notion of living wills or powers of attorney for personal care. I worked with them to bring that into place as a member of the opposition.

So I say to all legislators: You can in fact do things when you are not a cabinet minister, but you have to be persistent and noisy about one particular project and be focused on it.

When I became Minister of Consumer and Commercial Affairs, when Mike Harris appointed me, I wasn't at all chagrined at being appointed to that or sad about that. I walked out of cabinet one day and Jim Wallace, who worked then for the Toronto Sun, said to me, "Norm, what are you going to do to modernize the alcohol laws in the province of Ontario?" And I said, "I'm going to do two things. I'm going to put beer on the golf course, and I'm going to extend bar hours." I did it because in my constituency, golf course owners were losing business to the Quebec side because they were doing that, even though it wasn't within their laws; and I wanted to extend the hours because we were losing young people who were drinking and then getting in their cars and driving over to Quebec, which had longer hours. So, particularly in the constituency of my friend John Yakabuski, we were losing young people who were not following the law, getting in their cars when they were inebriated and going across. So I probably will be remembered for that—at least, I mention it from time to time when I step up to the counter to pay my green fee.

I had a wonderful experience following my good friend Jim Bradley in the Ministry of the Environment as the Minister of Energy. I was the Minister of Energy and the Minister of the Environment at the same time. I never could figure out how you could do both without a conflict, but that was the way it was when we were handed off government from the NDP. But I did become Minister of the Environment and worked on a number of difficult issues.

Perhaps the one we pulled off the best was the Drive Clean program. We not only brought in a brand new program, but we got it right the first time. Everywhere else in North America, when they brought in this particular program, it had to be brought back and rejigged. We told the people before we brought it out what it was to do, and the people accepted it.

Now, I've said from time to time that that program was designed for a seven- to 10-year period, and this is more than seven or 10 years later. Notwithstanding that—this is not a political night in terms of saying to people what they should or shouldn't do in future—I was very proud of that program.

As Minister of Transportation under Mike Harris's government, I was the only civil engineer who has ever occupied that post. I can never forget the first meeting I had with the staff at the Ministry of Transportation. When they came in, they introduced all their people, and there was a position—there probably still is in the Ministry of Transportation—of chief engineer. They said, "This is the chief engineer of the Ministry of Transportation." And I immediately said back to them, "No, you're no longer the chief engineer. You're looking at him."

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I was there for far too short of a period of time. I loved the Ministry of Transportation. When I was a student, I built roads, I designed roads. I knew what that was all about.

I did one thing, particularly for my friend Johnny Pappain, who lives up in Brampton. He and I drove through the 410. We got the 410 going north of where it is to go around up to Highway 10. That project was sitting idle, it had to get off the shelf, and I got my people moving on it. So now when you go up the 410, you can go around Brampton in a lot better time than you ever could before. That was one of the concrete things that I did as the Minister of Transportation.

I also announced a whole number of highways down in the area I represent.

Anyway, I was honoured to serve as the Attorney General of this province for a short period of time, about eight months. Knowing that an election was coming along, I said to my deputy, "I'm going to be here for a short period of time. I want to do some things here in the Attorney General's department before I go." There were two significant accomplishments that I was able to do during that period of time. One was, I went to cabinet and I said, "I have to have some more judges," and got a significant influx of money in order to expand the justices. We were going into an area where we could be dismissing cases because we weren't properly handling them. That was one.

The second thing was, I started the paralegal regulation with the Law Society of Upper Canada. I said to their groups, boldly, straightforward, "Look, I would love to let you self-regulate, but you don't have the organization to be able to do it. If you want to do it 10 years from now, come back and see the government and talk

about it." As the Attorney General, I appointed the first paralegal as a lay benchler to the Law Society of Upper Canada. Paul Dray was a tremendous individual and was able to carry it forward. I'll tell you, that has been a tremendous experience. The paralegals couldn't be happier with what has happened, and so I'm proud of that as well.

During the last eight years—and I'd better wind up here, because I think I've gone over my five minutes—

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: And your 34 on top of that.

Mr. Norman W. Sterling: During the last eight years, I've enjoyed chairing the public accounts committee, and I've had tremendous support from all sides of the House. I think we've had perhaps one or two votes where we quarrelled over something fairly insignificant.

I think it was telling when Shelley Martel, who was the first member for the New Democratic Party, came to me after we were sitting down and said, "Are we going to have a motion about how long each person can speak or how it will be rotated?" I said, "Look, Shelley, let's just start this off as though we're all going to have the same goal. If you have any complaints or you want to have a formal motion, we'll deal with that later." The formal motion never came in the eight years I was there, because everyone on that committee was treated as well as they could possibly be. No one felt that they were being denied the opportunity to ask a question or deal with a matter.

So we have produced over the last eight years not only some tremendous reports which the bureaucracy is paying a great deal of attention to—we have achieved some significant savings from the bureaucracy for the government. Not only that, we have altered the process to some degree. The next public accounts committee of this Legislature in the next Parliament will be better suited to deal with a whole host of matters and I hope will be empowered to take on an even greater role than we were. I'm proud of those reforms. I'm proud of the members who sat on it: Liz Sandals, Dave Zimmer, France, Peter Shurman, Julia Munro, Teddy Arnott and Sylvia. There were a tremendous number of people who were there. And do you know what? We all felt we were doing a constructive job and we all felt good after we were doing it.

A final word: I just want to say that I am sorry to be leaving this place, because one of the things that I would have wanted to do before I left was to be able to change even more. I feel that the institution needs a great deal of change. We've lost the whole notion of the Legislature holding the government accountable for what they do. Therefore, I would recommend that somewhere down the road, hopefully very soon, in order to gain back the confidence of the people of Ontario in our institution, perhaps, whoever the Premier is, they consider sharing some of their power with committees of the Legislature, with other Legislatures finding innovative ways to do that. Perhaps it's a time for another Camp report on how to deal with that particular matter.

I leave this place not only feeling tremendously lucky that I was given so many opportunities to help the people

I represent down in eastern Ontario, where I was born and raised and went to school, but I also feel tremendously lucky that I had a wonderful, beautiful, supportive family and friends to go through that journey.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): To the member from Carleton–Mississippi Mills: On behalf of all members of the Legislature and all of the legislative staff, thank you for your contributions to this building and to the citizens of Ontario.

MEMBER FOR TIMISKAMING–COCHRANE

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): It's now an opportunity to recognize the service of the member for Timiskaming–Cochrane, David Ramsay. I'd like to call on Minister without Portfolio Gerry Phillips to begin the tribute.

Hon. Gerry Phillips: I'm honoured to have a chance to say a few words about my great friend David—and I can use the word "David," I think, Mr. Speaker. He should be very proud of his accomplishments here for 24 years. When I think of you, David, I think of somebody who brings an enormous amount of sensible judgment to issues. You somehow or other, have an ability to arrive at the right place on complex issues.

I got a chance to work with you first back in 1987-90 when David had the Ministry of Correctional Services—very complex then; very difficult. David found some creative new solutions. He then was the Minister of Agriculture, and I've always found that ministry challenging because of so many constituents with legitimate concerns. David, you handled that with great skill. Then, when we were in opposition, David was the caucus chair. For those of you who have been caucus chairs in opposition, it's not that easy to keep a caucus in line. David did a fabulous job.

He and I have a great relationship. One time, he was getting slightly impatient with us. He said, "I've got a suggestion. When a point has been made at caucus by somebody, there's no need for others to keep making the same point." Everybody paused. I said, "David, I have an idea. When a point has been made at caucus, I think there's no need for people to make the same point again." Anyway, I liked it. We had a lot of fun. He was fabulous as caucus chair.

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He ran for the leadership in the early 1990s, as many of you will remember. David, you were the first one who really was on the technology edge. You were famous for the information highway. Many of us thought it was something to be four-laned to the north, but you knew what it was. David was in the forefront on that.

I realize I have only two minutes, and I have almost used my time.

He did a terrific job as Minister of Natural Resources and also aboriginal affairs, and those things are difficult. He's a minister from the north dealing with MNR issues

and aboriginal issues. David, you brought your great skills to that. I'm proud to speak on behalf of our caucus and to thank you. Personally, I've had more laughs with you than any other caucus member or any other member of the Legislature, and I thank you particularly for that. You have made my life very, very pleasant around here.

David, the best of luck to you and Kathleen on your future.

Mr. Norman W. Sterling: I almost hesitate in getting up again.

I got to know David during his career as a minister and as a member of the Legislature. The thing that I found most intriguing about David was, when he was Minister of Agriculture, I was chairing the committee on commissions, agencies and boards, and we were dealing with the Ontario Food Terminal. We went through a whole bunch of recommendations. I sat on the committee, and I thought, at the end of the committee, here are a group of individuals sitting on a committee who were seized of a matter, who understand what's happening at the Ontario Food Terminal. So I took the unusual step, as a member of the opposition at that point in time, and went to David, who was then the Minister of Agriculture, and I said, "David, one of the things that the committee feels is that there shouldn't be a monopoly by the Ontario Food Terminal for ever and ever. There should be an opportunity for other people to be involved in setting up competing food terminals."

David, not to my surprise but to my gratification, came forward and said, "You're right, Norm." I said, "Can we work together, you and I, to bring forward a bill that the committee can bring forward to the Legislature in order to open it up? It may be easier for you as the Minister of Agriculture to do that." I was really, really pleased that he saw the opportunity and took the opportunity, and together we brought before this Legislature what I would call the first committee bill that this Legislature ever saw. That was because of the leadership of David Ramsay and the fact that he could step outside the box and do something different.

He has also exhibited that kind of independence in thought on my public accounts committee during the last while as he has served there. David, you not only are there to parrot what is perhaps the most politically acceptable policy, but you're there to find solutions. Congratulations on your experience and your service as minister. Congratulations on your service as an MPP. You have done a great job for us all. Thank you.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Oh my God, here I go. Stop. I've got to tell a couple of stories, because you wouldn't be able to do this without some of the stories.

I first met David—I don't know if he remembers—back in the 1985 campaign. I was actually in Kirkland Lake. If you remember, Sandra Clifford, I believe, was your campaign manager. At the time, I worked for the union. I was on my way through, and they asked us to stop into those campaigns where we thought we had a good shot of running. So I actually went out knocking on doors for David, and it looks like we were somewhat successful that time. We'll just leave it at that.

I really would love to go through some of the quotes that Bob Rae made at the time that you left the NDP caucus. God, they're priceless. Could I? No, I won't. It would not be the nice thing to do.

Anyway, I just want to say this: David is a fellow northerner, as I am, and we have sparred lots in northern Ontario, as in this Legislature, on a number of issues of principle, and that's the way that I would put them. David and I have not agreed on some of those issues in regard to direction, but the one thing I can say is that David did what he believed was right. It wasn't a question of doing what was politically expedient, it wasn't about doing what the Premier wanted; it was doing what he wanted to do in regard to what he thought was important to northern Ontario.

We've had lots of time in this Legislature, lots of time on the airways. I can remember particularly a story about a bear dump somewhere up in Kirkland Lake, but we're not going to go into that one. We've had lots of opportunities to spar over the years. What has been really good is that neither David nor I took it personally. David understood that he had a job, I had a job and we did our jobs well, and that meant that at times sparring would happen.

I know that you served your constituents well because, Christ, we could never get the riding back. So, I have to say, obviously, you did some work in your riding that stood well when it came to your constituents. I think that speaks to your commitment to the people of the north, the people of your constituency. It's not often that people get to pick their exit out of this place. That you're able to do that, that you're able to leave from the Legislature and from Timiskaming with a good record says volumes.

On behalf of Andrea Horwath, on behalf of John Vanthoff, our mutual friend, and others, I would like to wish you well and to say, God bless in your travels. I hope you have a great time. If you're ever looking for friends and people to talk to, Charlie Angus and I will always never be more than a phone call away.

Applause.

Mr. David Ramsay: I am very humbled to stand in my place tonight to say goodbye to a lot of good friends. When I think about the time that I've had the privilege and honour to be here, in the end it's really about the people—all the people that I've worked for, which is my first obligation, the people at home, but all of the people I've met as my colleagues, on all sides of the House, over all of those years, and all the people that you get involved with when you try to solve the challenges that face the people of your riding or the people of Ontario.

The other thing I think about is how much I love the riding that I represent. It has grown over the years. I was first the member for Timiskaming. It was a relatively small area—basically from Kirkland Lake through the Tri-Town area around Lake Timiskaming down to Temagami. You could drive the length of it easily in a couple of hours. In those days, I could do that in an hour and a half, but I've slowed down since those days. Over time, it has now enlarged three times. It goes to the 49th parallel in Cochrane all the way down to the French

River, the fifth-largest riding in the province. It's one of the most beautiful parts of the province.

I think that all of us as members have had the wonderful opportunity to travel right across this province. Not only do we live in the greatest country in the world, but Ontario is one of the most beautiful provinces in this country, from east to west and north to south. It is stunning. Everybody needs to travel the length and breadth of this province to appreciate its magnificence. It is just incredible.

In a riding such as mine, the issues have always been of grave importance. They seem to be of grave economic importance for sustaining people's lives. I've had a few of those over the years. When you're there, you just go to the challenge and you go to the fight—whatever you need to do. We've had a few of those challenges over the years, but in the end the area is surviving, and in fact I'd almost say that today it's actually rather prospering, some of that by the hard work of the folks that work very hard in my riding and some of it by good luck, as we're blessed with wonderful resources. The world demand for resources today is really fantastic, so northern Ontario is really going to be flourishing again, thank goodness. And that's great.

The people I represent are very, very hard-working people. They work in mines and mills. Some get the chance to work in a factory, but a lot of it is very hard work, out in the bush, on the fields; a lot of it's physical work. Their recreation is enjoying the beauty of northern Ontario, its hunting and fishing and the winter sports that our area affords. It's a simple life, it's a basic life, but it's a very satisfying life.

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I started up there working with my hands: milking cows, having a beef herd, growing grain and working on tractors. That's what a lot of the people I represent still do today. They're great people, and I'm just very proud to have had the opportunity to serve them for the number of years that I have. You don't want to tell people in Ontario, but I still think, and I think the majority of my colleagues would say, that this is probably the greatest job that there is in this province: to represent the people that you live with, your community and your neighbours. I'm very honoured to have had that opportunity. I thank all of you here, and all those people who were here during the time that I've been here, for all their support and their help. I wish all the future members who will fill these seats in the fall all the best for working very hard for the province that we all love.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): David, on behalf of all members of the Legislature and the staff here at the Legislature, we thank you for your service to your constituents and your service to the people of Ontario. All the best in the future.

MEMBER FOR SCARBOROUGH-AGINCOURT

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Now we're going to honour Gerry Phillips, minister without portfolio. I'd

like to call on the Minister of Finance to begin the tributes.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: It's a wonderful privilege for me to say, thank you and best wishes going forward. I think that everybody in the House would agree—and the biography is wonderful: 35 years in elective office, in school board capacity, as an MPP in government, in opposition, and a variety of cabinet portfolios. I think he's probably more proud of the fact that he coached minor hockey for 30 years. He tells wonderful stories about those days.

Time doesn't permit to go into all of the enormous achievements he has had in his career. I can tell you, Gerry: Everywhere I go in the world, people are asking, "What happened to Treasury Watch?" They're still looking for the most up-to-date copies.

But I think I would speak on behalf of our colleagues if I said, thank you for your friendship, your sense of humour and your support for all of us.

Gerry, for our caucus, has always been sort of like the Rock of Gibraltar. You could go to him for good advice, for a helping hand. In fact, most members don't know this: He has been sworn into the budget process for the last four years now and has been involved—and I take responsibility for everything you don't like, but he has been sworn in and been an intimate part of that process and a huge inspiration to all of us.

I want to take a moment to thank Kay, who's in the audience today—I know Gerry will—and his family: Mark, Kerry, Matt, Kyle and their partners and spouses, and his five grandchildren: Jesse Lyle, and Sara, Chloe, Emma and Abby Phillips. Thanks to you for sharing him with us. We give him back to you, but we're still going to call on him because he has so many wonderful insights to life and to the public life of this province, and as a friend and adviser to all of us.

Gerry, you're a remarkable friend and a great guy. Good luck.

Applause.

Mr. Norman W. Sterling: There will be other speakers from my caucus coming soon.

I'll going to read a statement here: "Mr. Phillips is a wonderful gentleman, a wonderful politician, and should have been Premier." Oh, that was the stuff that you sent over to me, Gerry; I'm sorry.

I've known Gerry for a considerable amount of time. I know how important Kay and the family, the Blues brothers and all of the rest of them, are to Gerry and his family. He has a remarkable record in terms of his family.

Gerry, I've read all of the background about you, and it doesn't mention your golf game at all. I understand why your golf game is not mentioned. I've played golf with Gerry on a number of occasions over the years.

He is sort of the voice of reason. I think he should be a Tory, actually. I think he should have been a Tory.

Interjection: Not a chance.

Mr. Norman W. Sterling: Not a chance.

When Gerry was in opposition, I think that one of the most amusing parts of walking into question period each day was—Gerry was the finance critic, and Gerry would carry his filing cabinet under his arm, like this. He'd have I don't know how many books here, but he'd have the last budget and the whatever, whatever, whatever. Gerry was very effective as a critic; he always knew his stuff. I believe and I've heard that he knows his stuff as a cabinet minister as well. I'm certain that your contribution as Chair of Management Board or treasury board, whatever we call it these days, as well as your commitment to government running efficiently, has done a tremendous amount of work for your present government.

I want to congratulate you on that work. A lot of it is hard slogging and a lot of it is not very exciting but, Gerry, you've been in the trenches and you know what you're doing. You're greatly respected by our caucus and by all members of this Legislature. God bless you in your retirement.

Applause.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Gerry, I want to avow to something: that I shaped myself, as far as how I do things in this place, on a few people, and one of them was you. I never told you that, and I'll tell you the story now. As I got here in the early 1990s, I came in in the sweep. It didn't matter who you were on the ballot; you came in as a New Democrat and you got elected. I stayed, I always said, because Shelley Martel explained to me that I wasn't elected as a great parliamentarian; I would get re-elected if I went to my riding, and I did that.

But the real test came when I came back in opposition. This is where I observed, because you were in opposition, at the time, to the Conservative government, and you were one of the people who I used to watch in the House, because you sort of figured out what your shtick was. This is a thing that I figured out watching you and a few other members—who I won't talk about now, because some are gone and some haven't retired, and I don't want to tell them anything unless they leave this place.

But I watched, and it was the Dudley George issue. I was the newly minted critic for aboriginal affairs. I watched you day in and day out just go after the government, day after day, day after day, putting the questions to the government, trying to get an inquiry going. And I observed that you figured out, long before I ever figured it out, that a person has to basically get traction on an issue, and once you get traction on the issue you become a little bit the go-to person. I learned that watching you, and I want to thank you for that. It's something that I probably shouldn't admit in the Legislature here, but I wanted to say that publicly.

I also watched you as the critic for finance. I learned, watching you, that I don't want to be the critic for finance, because, quite frankly, you were pretty awesome. You were able to pick up on the minutiae of the budget, to pick up on what were the salient points that were important from the perspective of your party and your beliefs, and to communicate that in some way that

made some sense to the media and to the general public, so they would go, "Yes, that Gerry guy seems to know what he's talking about. I like what he had to say." So I observed you in opposition and watched you do your work as the critic for finance.

Then I observed you in government. You played different roles in government. I tend to have a fairly good relationship with most people on both sides of the House, and you were one of the guys who I could go to and just have a discussion about a problem. You always looked at it as, "Well, this is a problem that affects somebody in Ontario. This is not a partisan issue. How do we fix the problem for this individual or this community?" For that, and on behalf of many people who have had to deal with you over the years in your different portfolios, I want to thank you.

But on this I want to end: We had a chat the other day downstairs—we were probably going to the cafeteria to get a coffee or something. I was having a bit of a chat with you about what you are going to do. We both started talking about our grandkids. First, it was just to watch your expression and your whole demeanour about your family. What was really moving to me was that you said, "We're a pretty tight bunch. All of my kids basically live in the neighbourhood. We eat supper at each other's places, and we do things together as a family. We hold tight." So I know that, yes, you might miss this place, and some, like the Minister of Finance, might miss you, but you're going to get a chance to reconnect with your family, something that unfortunately many of us have had to put on the back burner. I really envy your ability go back and to be the father, to be the husband and to be the grandfather to your grandchildren. We want to thank you for your time here.

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Hon. Gerry Phillips: I'm one of those lucky people in this world: Every day, I love my job. I love coming here. For 24 years I've been doing it, serving the people as best I can and hopefully having a positive impact. So it's been great. But as we all know, it's a bit demanding. I kind of looked ahead, and I said that I don't think I can commit for the next four years to this job. Reluctantly, I'm stepping down.

Strangely enough, I still love it every day. You sort of start to ask, am I making the right decision? But I suspect that if you make the decision to leave when you don't like the job, you've stayed too long. I've concluded that you've got to make that decision, and that's what I'm doing. I'm leaving with a terrific sense of satisfaction in what I hope I've been able to help accomplish here. I've had a core belief that my goal is to make sure that every single individual in this province has an equal opportunity. I hope I've contributed to that.

I leave here actually with no enemies. You're all my friends. I'm not mad at anybody. I leave with just friends and fond memories.

By the way I want to thank my friends Dwight, Norm and Gilles for your very nice comments. I appreciate it very much. You're all good friends, and I appreciate it.

I do want to thank the people of Scarborough—Agincourt. I've served them, as Dwight mentioned, now for like 40 years. I was on the school board for 11 years and the hospital board for seven years. They've been very good to me. Even those who don't agree with me, they've done it in, I think, the right way. They've let me know they don't agree with me but respecting me as a person, so I have been very lucky.

As Dwight mentioned, I did coach hockey for 30 years, and I loved that too. For those of you involved in minor hockey, I'll just tell you a quick story that illustrates why I loved it. One time, we were coaching six-year-olds, I think, and the goalie didn't show up. So you say, "Who wants to play goal?" and the kid volunteers, and away we went. Things didn't go all that well. The other team got 11 goals, and we got none. We're coming off the ice, and one of the little kids looks at me and says, "Jeez, Coach, what was the score of that game?" I said, "Well, it was 11-nothing." "Oh, for who?" I say that because they're there just having fun, and, therefore, I was there having fun. Believe me it's a great diversion, and many of you are involved in it.

I never sang, John, but I've been at the hockey—

Mr. John Yakabuski: You probably could.

Hon. Gerry Phillips: No, I couldn't. He said I probably could sing. I can't sing.

I want to thank the press gallery, by the way, too. I've been one of those lucky people: I've never actually been misquoted.

I want to thank my riding association. All of us know here how valuable they are. Many of them have been with me the full 24 years.

I want to echo what Norm said about the legislative staff. We're very lucky to have a professional, independent, non-biased legislative staff, and we should protect that at all costs.

And the role of Speaker is so important. I've spent more time in opposition, actually, than in government, so I really value the role the Speaker plays, and I think that we need to support you.

I want to also thank terrific staff sitting up there. Judy has worked for me—or I've worked with her—for 44 years. Beat that one, Norm. And my good friend Jessie. Perry was there earlier; I've hired him four times. He's left me three times, and I keep luring him back. He's very good. He was formerly with you, Premier. People in my constituency office have been with me more than 15 years, so I'm very lucky to have a great staff.

My caucus colleagues, thank you for everything you've done for me. You've been fabulous. That's part of enjoying it every day.

By the way, on opposition, I have a strong view that we may differ on issues, but you're here for the same reason I'm here. We just may have different solutions, but you, in my opinion, don't care any less about people than we do, so I've had, I think, a good, healthy relationship with the opposition.

If you don't mind, I'll thank Premier McGuinty. Without exception, he has responded to my needs. He's let me

do kind of what I wanted—and I thank you very much, Premier—including when, about three years ago, I said, “I want to throttle back a bit,” and he did that for me. I couldn’t have asked for somebody better to work with, Premier, than you.

Lastly, I want to talk about my family. Gilles, I think you mentioned it a lot, but I am blessed to have a large, wonderful, supportive family. My wife and I have four kids with spouses—five grandkids. Three generations are here: my great-grandson Jesse, who’s a good friend of the Premier’s, I might add, sitting right in the front row there, and then my daughter, Kerry, and then my wife, Kay. They are here today, and as I say, nobody could have a better family than I did.

Normally, Gilles, this is where somebody like me says, “I’m looking forward to spending more time with my family.” The reality is, I spend a lot of time with my family. As you said, Gilles, Jesse and Kerry live three doors from us; another one of our sons lives six doors; another one, two blocks. They’re there almost every day, so I’ve got to be a little bit cautious with, “Here comes your dad again,” walking up to the door. But I’m looking forward to spending more time with the grandkids.

Finally, to my lovely wife, Kay: I’m a bit of a numbers guy, as some of you may know. You mentioned it, Gilles. We’ve now been married for almost 50 years. That is 18,000 days that my wife has looked after me with loving care, and I can’t tell you how lucky I am to have someone like that. Luckily for me, there’s no end in sight, so I look forward—Kay says, “Get one thing straight: I’m not making breakfast, I’m not making lunch, but I’m looking forward to seeing more of you.”

Finally, I’ll really miss this place. I’m leaving knowing it’s the right decision, but certainly not counting the days. As I say, we’re all lucky to have this position. For me, even though I’m leaving, my memories will live on. Thank you very much.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): To Gerry Phillips on behalf of the staff and the members here at the Legislative Assembly of Ontario: Thank you as well for your service to your constituents and your service to the people of Ontario.

MEMBER FOR BRUCE–GREY–OWEN SOUND

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Now we begin our tribute to the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, Bill Murdoch. I will call on the member from Wellington–Halton Hills, Ted Arnott.

Mr. Ted Arnott: Bill Murdoch is one of the true characters in the history of the Ontario Legislature. He’s truly one of a kind. I call him a character in the way that we define that word in rural Ontario, meaning someone with a unique and ever-present sense of humour, whom you can never forget, even though some days you might want to. And I call him a character in the sense that he demonstrates unique and ever-present character, meaning a basic, unvarnished and direct honesty that means you

always know where he stands and you know where you stand with him. That’s a rare thing around here, and it makes Bognor Bill unique and stand out.

I first heard of William Murdoch in a series of *Globe and Mail* columns by Michael Valpy in the 1980s. According to the stories, Bill—then the reeve of Sydenham township in Grey county—was asked to defend the planning policies of the county of Grey. Bill’s answer was this: that the people of Grey have rights, and their local councils have rights. The Toronto transplants are welcome in rural Ontario, but they need to understand that what Bill calls the “Toronto mentality” does not carry the day in the county of Grey.

We were both elected to the Legislature for the first time in 1990 in adjacent ridings, and we’ve served together ever since. In 1999, the *Toronto Star* called him a “moose on the loose” for his outspoken and independent views on the government of the day—our government. I would say that a more apt description might have been “crazy like a fox,” or better yet, “the Owen Sound Attack.”

From time to time, he may have annoyed the Premier’s staff, whom he once famously called “pimple-faced”—on second thought, I won’t finish the sentence, the final word beginning with an N, but to this day a subject of some dispute.

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A review of some of Bill’s legislative proposals includes the reform of the Niagara Escarpment Commission—you recall that, Norm—to promote local autonomy; a proposal to license marriage commissioners; an end to voicemail in government offices to better serve constituents; always support for the beef industry and support for all farmers; and standing up to keep his jail open, as he did so eloquently this morning in question period. And let’s not forget his crowning achievement: leading the recognition of the great Scottish heritage of this province, including declaring April 6 as Tartan Day and establishing an Ontario tartan. I wear my tartan tie, the Ontario tartan, today to salute Bill.

While he was proud to come to work in Toronto, he had, shall we say, an ambivalent attitude about the big town. In fact, he thought it would be a good idea to build a wall around it to keep the coyotes out and the city folk in the city.

In his spare time—which he had very little of, because no one ever worked harder in his riding than Bill did—Bill raised cattle, pulling calves, which he will describe for you in vivid detail if your stomach is strong enough to hear all about it. He collects autographed hockey sweaters. He now has probably the largest private collection of autographed NHL sweaters, I bet, in the world. He and Sue make their annual sojourn to Cuba, where one day he will get his meeting with Castro that he keeps asking for, and Fidel will learn a thing or two about politics. Mentioning Sue, we know how her support was the pillar upon which Bill leaned and a source of his political strength. Their family—their daughters Angie and Karen—are Bill and Sue’s greatest accomplishment of all. We’re delighted that you’re here with us tonight.

We know that in the future we'll be able to keep in touch with Bill on CFOS Radio in Owen Sound on his phone-in radio show on Mondays.

I consider Bill to be one of my best friends in this place. I was glad to be in Owen Sound last Friday with hundreds of Bill and Sue's friends celebrating his public career. Chris Stockwell, I thought, said it best: "As long as Bill Murdoch was in the Legislature, there were four parties: the PCs, the Libs, the Dippers and Murdoch." We'll miss the Murdoch party. It was fun while it lasted. It will inspire mavericks for years to come to speak up for our representative democracy, as Bill calls it; to speak up for our people, the people who sent us here; to fight for what we believe in; and to tell the party whips and the unelected advisers in the leader's offices to go pound salt.

Congratulations, Bill, and thank you very much for your service.

Mr. Paul Miller: It's my pleasure to represent the New Democratic Party in these farewell comments about Bill Murdoch, the 21-year member for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound. I know Bill definitely had some left leanings because he comes from Agnes Macphail country.

We all know Bill to be a colourful figure in this Legislature, not only by his actions but also by his colourful dress. Bill's kilt has been worn often enough but has been quite notable on occasions when he has graced this Legislature wearing it. It has been an enjoyable time for me also, reminding me of my own Scottish heritage.

I've watched and followed Bill's activities closely. In the future, if I do anything wrong in this House, I'll be blaming the Bill Murdoch training program.

For 21 years, Bill has brought a particular brand of representation to this House. He has served on numerous committees in this Legislature but stands out in my mind for the period when he sat as an independent member. Bill maintained his good nature and dedication to his job even though no longer a member of the Tory caucus. He ensured that he was afforded his right to ask questions, thanks to the Speaker, during question period, and was vigilant in asking questions that represented his beliefs and those of his constituents.

Bill was welcoming and warm to me as a rookie MPP, even though from another party—behaviour that we should all aspire to. When I needed support for a private member's bill to move to the committee agenda, Bill subbed in for a colleague to support my efforts. Bill recognized that the issue was what mattered, not the party I belonged to. That's the sort of support of real causes that we should all emulate.

He lost his job for an independent comment for not toeing the party line, but that was what we should be able to expect from MPPs who truly believe in their convictions.

Bill's famous musings about switching to the NDP so that we would have party status are an example of the kind of mischievous nature that is always just below that surface. Our party was a bit surprised by these musings and might have thought seriously about approaching Bill

to follow through, but may have had second thoughts about a caucus with both Murdoch and Kormos.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: and Miller.

Mr. Paul Miller: And Miller. There would have never been a dull moment.

In closing, Bill, I want to thank you for your contributions to this Legislature: his unfailing representation of his constituents, his colourful antics in this Legislature and his friendly, supportive manner in his dealings with me. I want to wish Bill and his family all the best on behalf of the NDP, and wish him many happy and healthy years in retirement.

Hon. Carol Mitchell: I must say that I am absolutely delighted to be a part of the tribute for Bill Murdoch this evening. I wanted to share a number of stories. We have had so many good times with my friend Bill, and we get to carve the beast, as we say in Chesley, every summer in July for the cattlemen, and all the people line up to carve the beef. They all head to one table, whatever party you belong to, whatever level of government, but then Bill and I like to work one table. He does the Tory cuts and I give the Liberals slices, and we have everyone laughing and having a good time and remembering why agriculture is so important.

I can tell you that at every plowing match, it is always an experience with Bill. I think about one time I was so mad at Bill. You just have to say sometimes—Sue, I'm sure you know what I mean, because I know Bill went home and told Sue how mad I was at him. Beautiful flowers showed up that afternoon, and you know what? That's what it's all about. Bill has a big heart. He has a big heart and demonstrates it in so many ways. He demonstrates it to his community, I can tell you, every day, whether it's the hockey game that he's watching, encouraging all of the hockey players, or the Order of Good Cheer. I can tell you that when I'm in Owen Sound, I've heard about all of the community work that you have done, Bill. Congratulations. He's a Legion member, and, quite frankly, when we think about the tartan, we think of Bill Murdoch and his respect for his Scottish heritage. I have always been proud of the fact that you have been able to bring that forward, the Ontario tartan. Congratulations, Bill.

When I think about Bill, I have to say that it's a strong voice in rural Ontario, and it's so strong that it can belong to multiple parties at a time and be able to juggle them all together. One could only do that with a big heart and a strong base. So Sue and the family, you're going to get him home, but I know he'll be doing his talk show, and I know that there's going to be some calls coming, and I look forward to the calls, Bill. Enjoy your retirement. You have given so much to your riding and to the province, and I do want to thank you. I do call you my friend, now and into the future. Thank you, Bill.

Mr. Bill Murdoch: I want to thank Ted, Paul and Carol for those wonderful words. Sometimes we don't get a chance to do that in here. I'm a bit emotional now.

Interjection.

Mr. Bill Murdoch: I've put my Little Norm in here. I've got to pull him out; I don't want to get in trouble,

because he's a prop. This is Little Norm. Sterling says that he beat me at plowing and he gave me this, and I didn't get it and I was mad. But I don't remember that. Anyway, it's sort of like Linus, who had a little—well, this is my comfort here. I'll put him back out.

Anyway, I just appreciate what everybody said. When I first came here, I listened to some people, and actually, Mike Harris gave me some advice. I didn't always listen to what Mike told me, but he did say that your family should come first, then your riding and then here, and I've tried to live that way.

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My family is here. Susan, my wife, is up there. Angola, my daughter, and Karen, my other daughter, are both here. I have my sister Elizabeth and her son Michael Harris. Mike's going to have a name like that for the rest of his life. I have a couple of friends, Kees and Linda van Aalst, who were here earlier today. I appreciate them being here today because if you didn't have a good family behind you, you'd never last here as long as I have, and I really appreciate that. They pay the price too when you're not here, especially when you come from a rural riding and you're further away and you can't get home a lot.

There are a lot of thank-yous I want to do because I've had great staff. I want to mention Sandra Breedon. She's been with me ever since I started. We had two offices in my riding: We had one in Markdale and one in Owen Sound when I first got elected, and Sandra ran the one in Markdale. I lost that area for a while, and she moved up to Owen Sound. She's been with me the whole time, for my whole 21 years. And I've had lots of other staff, too, that have really helped me. If it wasn't for the staff—that's a big, important thing. I learned that when I was in municipal politics. When I was reeve, the clerk was our person who sort of ran everything. If you didn't have a good clerk, you could get yourself in a lot of trouble. I always was lucky when I was reeve of my township that I had good staff there also.

And staff here at Queen's Park: I have to say that the clerks' desk and all the other people who work around here have always been pretty good to me. Sometimes I get some bureaucrats who really don't like me, but they're further out. I'm talking about everybody who's in this building and the buildings right here. They've always been great.

And that goes for the Speakers: I've been really lucky to have been friends with all the Speakers here. But, Steve, you really treated me well when that corner was occupied over there and it was me, myself and I, and I thought there were three of us there and we were doing a pretty good job. But if it wasn't for Steve coming through—as the Speaker, you've made it good for me. I know I was bad sometimes in here, and I ask your forgiveness on that. It was part of the whole thing, and it never was meant to make things difficult for you, even though it may have. As I say, I can apologize for those and I have, and I'd do that again.

The other thing is, you have to have lots of friends to stay here. I've really been lucky through the years that

I've been here and in my municipal time that I had lots of friends who always stood behind me, and they helped me in elections and everything. I really want to just put that out there to all my friends that I've had who stood behind me and helped me get through all this.

The other one is the colleagues, all you guys and all you guys over there. I sometimes say things in here that we shouldn't, and we all do that, but I think that everybody who runs for political office, especially those who get elected, means well when they come here. They get elected to actually help the people in their riding. Even though I may not agree with some of the way you do that, I think truly you all ran because that's what you felt: that you could make Ontario a better place to be, and that's why you ran. I just appreciate everybody who has been here for the last 21 years.

I've really been fortunate; I've gone through all three governments. I started with the NDP, then we had the Conservatives, and now we have the Liberals. So I've seen you all. Somebody asked, "Were any of them any good?" I said, "Well, I'm still trying to figure that one out," because I had everyone. Maybe the best one was that independent one. I was lucky to have that. I had that chance, though, and I don't regret that. I don't regret being here and doing the best I could for my area. As I say, I think this is what everybody does here.

The other one is my constituents. They've been loyal to me, really great. I've been elected, I think, five times since 1990, and they've always sent me back here. I have, as I say, a lot of friends, but the constituents—there's people I don't know. Sometimes people think they're well known in a riding, but there's always somebody coming up, and I say, "I don't think I've ever met that person," but they know who you are. They've always been good to me, and I appreciate it. I have fun with them now on my show. I have a radio show called Murdoch Mondays, if you can believe that. It's an open line on anything, and we do have some good fun with that.

Who knows what I'll do? I haven't really decided. I still have a farm, but before I came down here on Monday, my bulls were all out. You can imagine: Spring is here, they wanted to go, and I had to fix fences before I came. So a lot happens. I don't know whether I want to do too much more fence-fixing or not.

I just want to tell you all that I appreciate it all. I appreciate my family, I appreciate you being here and all the good times we've had. I have lots of them to remember. I'm sure I'll get a chance to see you all at a fish fry or whatever you want to come to and visit us in Bruce and Grey and Owen Sound. I consider that the best place to live in the world. Thank you very much.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): To Bill Murdoch, the MPP from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, apology accepted.

I want to just take this opportunity on behalf of the Legislature and all the staff and members to thank you for your service to the constituents that you have represented, and the citizens of Ontario. Thank you very much.

MEMBER FOR ESSEX

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): It's now our opportunity to pay tribute to Bruce Crozier, the member from Essex, and I'd like to call on the member from Algoma-Manitoulin, Mike Brown.

Mr. Michael A. Brown: I think the first thing—and I don't know about the formalities today—is I'd like to ask for unanimous consent to wear the bow tie button of Bruce Crozier.

Interjections: Agreed.

Mr. Michael A. Brown: Agreed. I'm sorry I don't have one for everybody.

I want to say that I met Bruce for the first time back in 1993, when he appeared after a by-election in southern Ontario—as I might want to put it, the most southerly riding in the entire province. When you come from Algoma-Manitoulin—I mean, we wear shorts there in January. So we were rather surprised by Bruce's arrival. We sat over there somewhere, Bruce, and enjoyed that. But as we went along, I got to know a little bit about this fellow Crozier who had come from Leamington. He had been a mayor, he had been on municipal council, he came here and has now served 18 years, if my math is even close to right. So he has contributed to his community for a very long time.

But the thing most of us remember is this: that shortly after his election in 1993, one of my constituents had been given a bow tie by probably the most famous representative of our constituency, Lester B. Pearson, who was also known for bow ties. Bruce wears that still, on occasion, and it means a lot to us.

Bruce has done a lot of things here. He has served three Speakers. During that time, he has set a record: He has served as Deputy Speaker longer than anyone in the province's history. He has been a huge voice for the people of rural Ontario. I think any member of our caucus and probably any of the other caucuses knows there's not a week that goes by that we don't hear from Bruce Crozier about an issue in rural Ontario, and that is an important feat he has sponsored.

I had a list here somewhere of all his private member's bills over the years, but he was recently successful in having one—and he was always complaining about this: He never got them to third reading. But he has just managed to get third reading on the Katelyn Bedard Bone Marrow Awareness Month Act. Congratulations, Bruce. It is a fabulous thing you've done with that and with representing your community.

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When he's not off at Indy or driving his own small red MG, or when he's not going to the famous Lions game on Thanksgiving day with his buddies, he is always thinking about Joan and the family. I've gotten to know them a bit—Joanie maybe a little more than a bit—and Bruce, you're a lucky guy.

We're lucky to have known you here, and good luck in your future endeavours. I know we haven't heard the last of Bruce Crozier.

Mrs. Julia Munro: I'm pleased to rise to honour our friend and colleague the member for Essex, who is retiring from the House. He has a long and distinguished record of public service to the people of Leamington, Essex county and Ontario. He served as a member of the council and mayor of Leamington, winning election to this House in a by-election in 1993.

In his community he is a lifetime member of the Kinsmen Club, holding a number of senior positions, including district governor and national director; it's certainly through that that I first learned of him in terms of my connections with the Kinsmen in my own community. His work benefited many community organizations in Leamington and area, and I know he will continue to remain an active member of the community.

During his years as Deputy Speaker of this Legislature, he has served with honour and distinction and with the respect of the whole House. He has been a source of sage advice to me since I became an Assistant Deputy Speaker. He is also a member of a very small but determined minority group: the wearers of the bow tie. As the spouse of another member of this small group, I can tell you I hold its members in great respect. After October 6 it will be up to some other new member of this House to maintain representation for the bow tie community at Queen's Park.

On behalf of the Ontario PC Party, I wish all of the best to my friend the member for Essex. He has always remained true to his beliefs, and he has served his constituents and our province to the best of his abilities. Most importantly, he is a true gentleman who has conducted himself with honour and dignity at all times.

May you enjoy many, many years of happiness with your wife, Joan, and your children and grandchildren. I know you will have a lot more time for the Indy.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: To Bruce we say probably not farewell. I know that you'll never be too far away from your friends and colleagues, so we know that many people here have you in good esteem.

I want to say a couple of redeeming things about Bruce that I have learned to appreciate over the years, and that is that he's got a pretty good sense of humour. Sometimes in committee—we both sat on the opposition side at one time, and the other time you were in government—we get a little bit passionate about issues, and Bruce has always tried to maintain a level head through that whole process, not let emotions get to him and, quite frankly, use humour in a very disarming way. I think that's something that some of us—and I look in the mirror on that one sometimes—should be able to learn.

One of the things that I will always remember about Bruce, and this is just a personal thing, but my daughter was about to have her first child—our first grandchild—and Bruce came up to me and had heard about that somehow or other, and said, “Oh, you've got no idea. You have absolutely no idea what you're in for.” And I thought, “Oh, give me a break. We've had kids. It's a kid like any other.” He said, “No, no, you have no idea. Just wait until that grandchild is born.” And I look at my

grandson Nathaniel, who is two and a half years old, and we have a second one, Victoria, who's about six months, and, man, were you right about that. When it comes to grandkids there's something about a connection that is just indescribable until you have one yourself, and you're the one that pointed that out to me.

As Deputy Speaker, always fair-minded; never allowed partisan politics to get in the way of what it is to be the Speaker or the Chair. That's something we thank you for, Speaker, because we owe you and we owe Bruce and others a great debt of gratitude for being the officials of our little ring match that we have here every now and then.

I just want to say on behalf of Andrea Horwath and the New Democrats that we wish you well and we say to you, Godspeed in your retirement.

Mr. Bruce Crozier: I want to thank Mike and Julia and Gilles, and all of you for being here this evening to send some of us off.

I'm one who believes I'm not the judge of what I do, either in here or out there. It'll be my constituents at home who make that decision and it'll be my colleagues in here who make that decision, so I'm not going to dwell on that.

But there are several things that I'm proud of. Private members' bills were alluded to. It may be, I don't know, a bit unusual, but I have had the success of three private member's bills. One would obviously receive unanimous support, and that's making the third week in June Ontario Wine Week—that's spelled w-i-n-e. The second was the Chase McEachern Act, which involved the limiting or taking away of any liability with using defibrillators. That was kind of a semi-private bill, because it didn't seem to be making much headway, so I asked Minister Smitherman to include it in a health bill. So it's in existence as the Chase McEachern Act. And then, of course, as was mentioned, Katelyn Bedard. That was special. That was one that, with the help of all of you, received second and third reading in the same day, and that was a special moment.

Murdoch—where did he go? Murdoch is here somewhere. You said you got a little bit emotional, but you know, there's a wager going on here on how long it'll be before I start to cry. But I'm not going to do that.

The greatest honour I have had, of course, is being elected to this place, and all of us share in that. The greatest honour inside the Legislature was to be nominated Deputy Speaker and to serve in the chair for seven and a half years. By the time it comes around, it will be almost eight, and depending on when the government comes back, I might have a full eight; you never know. Because technically the Speaker and I, I understand, hang on until new replacements are made for us.

There are so many people to thank. You have to be careful about naming anybody, but certainly the citizens of the riding of Essex South, where I started, and the riding of Essex are those that I have to thank for their support over the years.

The staff in my riding office over the years: I haven't had too many; I've had long-serving staff. One is retired;

one who has been there for a number of years is still there; and one just recently left—I wonder why. Also, the staff here at Queen's Park: Premier, some of them have gone to your office, some have gone to ministers' offices. I always encourage the young people in this place to improve their position in life and not hang around with an old guy like me, that there's no real future in that.

Of course, the staff in the precinct: That has been mentioned, too; Murdoch referred to that. I can say especially, because of being Deputy Speaker, to the clerks at the table—it was Claude DesRosiers when I first arrived here, and Deb Deller was the Deputy Clerk—Deborah, you and your staff have certainly given me sage advice from time to time, and I hope I listened to you at the time.

My colleagues on both sides of the House, I have to thank you all. I can't think of anybody in here with whom at some time or another I haven't shared a laugh or a story or a simple greeting, or maybe condolences, with each other—those things that our families endure.

I want to thank the three Speakers I've had the honour to work with. The Honourable Alvin Curling, the Honourable Mike Brown and the Honourable Steve Peters were great Speakers to work with. Speaker Peters and Speaker Brown have heard me say many times that as the Deputy Speaker you're kind of like the backup quarterback in football: You don't want anything to happen to the quarterback, but you do like to get into the game every once in a while. They have allowed me to do that.

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To my family: Of course, without their support, you just can't do this job, from our daughter Nancy, her husband Dave, Emma—who most of you have heard about in here—and Adam to our son Dave, his wife Jolean, Benjamin, Cowan and Cate. They've all been very supportive. I want to tell you one quick story. Emma, who's 10, on hearing that I wasn't going to be running again, said to her mom, "I'm sorry because I can't now tell my friends how important my grandpa is."

I choked up a bit.

Mr. Dave Levac: I won.

Mr. Bruce Crozier: Yes.

And to my wife of almost 50 years—Gerry, how many days, 18,000? Holy cow. She's a hero. In November, we'll have been married 50 years.

Applause.

Mr. Bruce Crozier: Yep. Actually, she wasn't born when we were married—it was arranged—because she's quite young. But she has shared every part of my public life, and you cannot do it without the support of your family and, if you have one, a spouse. Joan reminded me way early on that if there ever comes a time when you consider it a right to be in the Legislature rather than a privilege, it's time to quit. I still think it's a privilege, and I love you, Joan.

One last thing: When I came here almost 18 year ago, the day I was sworn in—December 14, 1993—Deborah Deller, the Deputy Clerk, brought me in because I had come in in a by-election, so I didn't have anybody else

around. I was going to be led in and introduced to the Legislature. Deborah brought me in and told me what I was going to have to do. I asked her to leave me alone standing right over there so I could look around this place and just soak up what a privilege it is to serve here. Deborah, I'm going to ask you one other more thing: Tomorrow—

Interruption.

Mr. Bruce Crozier: Answer that call, please.

Tomorrow, I'd like you to bring me up here again—

Interruption.

Mr. Bruce Crozier: That's not my phone.

Interruption.

Mr. Bruce Crozier: Not my phone. It's got me off track. But come with me tomorrow, walk me in here, and leave me here. Okay?

To you, Premier: For the leadership you've given to me, it's been a privilege to serve with you, and all of you. Thank you.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): To Bruce Crozier, the member from Essex, thank you for your service to this Legislature, the people of Ontario and your constituents.

MEMBER FOR CHATHAM-KENT-ESSEX

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd now like to ask the member from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex to begin our tribute to Pat Hoy, the member from Chatham-Kent-Essex.

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: Thank you very much, Speaker.

I'm going to let other people talk about Pat's political career of 16 years as the MPP for Chatham-Kent-Essex. I want to talk about Pat the father, the husband, the proud grandfather, the community advocate and fellow farmer. Pat has a long history in the agricultural community that I think a lot of you may not be aware of. He was heavily involved in the Federation of Agriculture at the local and the provincial levels. That's actually where I met that little guy. Then he was also a director for the corn producers.

Pat has been married to Deb, who is here with us tonight, for 39 years. He always tells us that they were childhood sweethearts and that he refers to her as Little Debbie. I don't know if she's aware of that at all. But he always lets us know how much he really cares about her and how important she is to him and to his life and to his work as an MPP.

Together they have had two children, Ryan and Erin; Erin is married to Scott. Between them, they have managed to build a great family relationship. I see that so very often when I talk to Pat and in the stories that he tells. Anybody who knows Pat and has ever hung out in the Van Brat knows that Pat has this great dry sense of humour. He could be a really good Bob Newhart if he tried; it might be a second career for him, or a third or fourth.

Pat is a Beatles fan and he's an avid collector of their memorabilia. But when I think of Pat and the things that he's done, I think his greatest day was when his grandson Trent was born and he and Deb became grandparents. We all know what it's like to be grandparents, if you're a grandparent and you walk around with your photos at the ready, but from the day that Trent was born, the photos and the stories started, and they continued. And then when Macy came and joined in, the stories just continued from there.

Pat, I wish you and Deb all the very best. Your family is waiting for you. I love you both.

Mr. Toby Barrett: It's truly an honour to recognize the dedication and the perseverance of the member from Chatham-Kent-Essex and what you've brought to this Legislature on behalf of your people. I've had an opportunity to work alongside Pat Hoy, especially for the last eight years. In 2003, Pat became Chair of the finance committee—and we were discussing this. Apparently, he has the record: eight years as finance Chair. I can speak for all members of that committee: You've been a great Chair. You run a tight ship, and that was appreciated by all; I can tell you that.

But you're much more than a top-notch Chair and legislator and, as we just heard, a proud farmer and a true family man. As we know, Pat and his wife Debbie are proud parents of son Ryan and daughter Erin, and equally proud grandparents.

I asked Pat the other day if he'd be buying a motor-home and going down to Arizona or something like that, and it looks like the Sunbelt is going to have to wait, because Pat made it very clear he's going to stick around for his grandchildren Macy and Trent. I just had a grandson arrive myself named Trent.

While family obviously takes precedence, those who know Pat recognize his skills in the politics of agriculture and farming as a priority. I think many of us know his previous history with the Federation of Agriculture, crop insurance, the corn producers and as agriculture critic. He's worked with the rural caucus, attracting doctors to rural areas and fighting the closure of schools.

But Pat's work as transportation critic, and we all know this story—ensuring the upgrades for that section of the 401 down his way; it had the moniker at one time of Carnage Alley. As well, his school bus safety bill received unanimous approval. Congratulations for that. I think everyone knows that story as well.

So thank you, Pat. Thank you for 16 years of service. You will enjoy getting back to your family and getting back to the land after the sacrifice you've made being away from your family for 16 years. I will say, people are going to miss you when they ride the bus and ride the plane on the finance committee, with his continuous drone of anecdotes and stories and wisdom. That will be missed on finance. Thank you, Pat.

2030

M^{me} France Gélinas: It's my pleasure to add a few words to Pat's retirement, the member from Chatham-Kent-Essex.

I first heard about him leaving the Legislative Assembly through the media, actually, and what I read was so much in line with the man that I have gotten to know. His office is just across the hall from mine, so we wave good morning to each other quite regularly. He said that he wanted to spend more time with his family, and I knew that to be true—just the way he cares about his family, the way he talks about his family, and I can see where the drive to spend more time with them and less time here could be very real.

I also had the pleasure to sub in at the finance committee where Pat was Chair, and there again, you can see the gentleman in action. Sure, he runs a tight ship: We had committee business that we had to go through. But at the same time, he did it in such a polite way. I happened to bring forward amendments that may not have been exactly on, so I was told, but he allowed them to be debated and he allowed people to speak on them so that people from all sides of the House would better understand why we had brought such amendments and what we were trying to do with this.

Obviously, everybody will remember him for the school bus safety bill. First, I didn't know it was you who had brought this forward, but it's very much in character with the man that you are. I always stop for school buses, but I will be thinking about you whenever I do it, from now on—and there are many, many on the rural roads where I live.

It was a pleasure to get to know you. Happy retirement. Do enjoy your family. You're a lucky man.

Mr. Pat Hoy: Thank you to all of my colleagues for those kind words. It has been an honour and a privilege to represent the people of Essex–Kent, and later Chatham–Kent–Essex—the Essex portion being Leamington.

Deb and I sincerely thank the voters for their support over the last 16 years. One can never predict how long they will be in this place. As I like to say, we're up for review every four years. The people of Chatham–Kent–Essex and Essex–Kent have seen fit to send me here four times, and I really appreciate their faith in me.

I thank my loyal staff. They have spent many years with me. They work tirelessly for me and on behalf of the constituents in Chatham–Kent–Essex and Essex–Kent. I named them here the other day because they were in the House, but I had some former staff, Caryl McCabe, Jamie Rylett, Marie Anne Ouellette and Mary Jo Sonneveld. They weren't able to be here the week before last. Jamie reminded me today that I had promised him when I hired him that I would try to win two elections. I don't remember making that comment, but I won four, and he was kind of giving me a jab about that.

I want to thank my riding association for their support and hard work. Many of them have been with me over these 16 years, and others on that association have worked when we had no member and when we had the member previous to that, so some of them have been there for 25 years and longer.

Debbie and I want to thank the Sunday group. Way back when I decided I would run, in 1993, I called a

group of friends and asked them to help me. We met one Sunday every month for over a year and a half. They are Marc and Marg Roszell, Lynn and Judith Girty, Alan and Donna Jean Pollard, Ed and Carol van de Wynckel, Brian and Shannon Prince, Armand and Annette Barrette and Mike and Marie Anne Ouellette. Some of them have been with me, as I said, since 1993. We are indeed friends forever.

I want to thank my dad and Dorothy. We farmed together, my dad and I, and I went to dad and said, "I'm thinking of getting into politics." I don't think he was totally surprised, and he became my biggest supporter. He did everything he could to advance my name and my career.

I want to thank our son, Ryan. Ryan is a teacher here in Scarborough. One of the things I remember most about his help on the campaigns—and he helped on all of them—was in the 1995 election. The campaign was 40 days, I believe, and I would be very, very tired, walking and walking and walking, and I'd be ready to go home from going door-knocking, and Ryan said, "We'd better do this street. We'll just go down to the cul-de-sac and back. You don't want to lose by 50 votes, Dad." So he kept pushing me and pushing me to do more.

It has been mentioned that our daughter Erin and Scott have given us two wonderful grandchildren, Trent and Macy, and she also worked on my campaigns.

I met Lyn McLeod here a couple weeks ago, and it was so joyous for me to meet her. She is a fine, fine lady. We had a good chat. She came to my nomination, and she, like all of us here, put her heart and soul into her career.

I want to thank the Premier for his vision for Ontario, and I want to thank you for your promise kept to make my bus bill a reality. For those of you who might not know, I sat in opposition, and I had a private member's bill. I kept championing that bill for eight years, and finally in the ninth year—through your help, Premier—it was passed, and it saves a lot of lives.

I want to thank all of my colleagues here, each and every one of you. We have made great friendships. I know that you do your best here each and every day. I think we have some of the finest people in government that the province has ever seen.

I want to also thank a girl I met when I was in grade 3. I want to thank Deb. She has done so much for me through my career; she is indeed my biggest supporter. I don't think anyone really realizes how important a spouse is until you're actually elected. You might think you know, but until you're actually elected, no one really knows the role of a spouse, and I love you so much. We will celebrate our 40th anniversary next year, and we will spend it together.

Applause.

Mr. Pat Hoy: Other years, I've been here.

When I came here and I made my maiden speech, I was extremely nervous, but I did walk around the building and took the whole atmosphere in the rooms into myself, in awe. On the front of this building the word

“agriculture” is engraved, along with some other fine words, and I just ask the members now and into the future to remember the importance and the prominence that agriculture deserves in our society.

Speaker, I feel very grateful to have served here in the people’s place. I always did my best, and I tried hard each and every day. I thank the voters who sent me here time after time, and to all of you I say thank you, thank you, thank you.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Pat Hoy, the member from Chatham–Kent–Essex, thank you for your service to the people of Ontario, and thank you for your service to the constituents that you represented. We wish you all the best.

MEMBER FOR GLENGARRY–
PRESCOTT–RUSSELL

DÉPUTÉ DE GLENGARRY–
PRESCOTT–RUSSELL

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I’d now like to ask the member from Brant to begin the tribute to our good friend Jean-Marc Lalonde, the member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell.

Mr. Dave Levac: Merci beaucoup, monsieur le Président. That’s it, Jean-Marc. That’s about the best I’m going to do right now. I don’t want to continue to insult the French. I am French, and I am relearning my language, but I’ll be back.

2040

I consider myself extremely lucky, privileged and honoured to pay tribute to our friend on behalf of the Liberal caucus, the member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell. Two expressions come to my mind: a class act, and a gentleman and a gentle man. This gentleman is a consummate francophone. He has been known around the world for the work that he has done for the francophonie.

But I want to start from the beginning. Born on August 19, 1935, in St-Pascal, he then moved to Rockland, which means he was born and raised in his riding. He had a wonderful municipal career, but before that, he married his lovely wife, Gisèle. They will be married in September for 52 years. They have two sons. Mario is married to Geneviève and their daughter Marie-Eve is 10 months old. François is married to Manon and they have two sons: Tristan, four, and Joshua, six.

His municipal career was 25 years—15 as the mayor of the town of Rockland. And 15 years as MPP. We’re batting numbers around: 40 years in public service to the communities in the province of Ontario.

He has some hobbies: bird watching. No, no, no. I’m going to let Steve Clark take care of that to explain, because he’s the youngest member of the Hockey Hall of Fame when it comes to Jean-Marc Lalonde. I’m going to leave the hockey alone because most people know about it and, quite frankly, the only time I mention it is when I want an autograph of Guy LaFleur.

He was the longest-serving MPP for Glengarry–Prescott–Russell. Two things I know that make it that way for him: I personally know that he makes over 10 to 15 personal phone calls every single day, seven days a week, and he has never been afraid to answer the tough questions. I consider him not only a colleague but a mentor and a friend.

I’m about to share with you something that is a secret. To the people of Ontario, to the francophonie of the world, it has been kept secret for too long. For many years, all of us have been subjected to this remarkable figure. A man who has righted wrongs and fought crime in the blink of an eye has come through this chamber. We’ve known him as two characters, as superheroes: Batman and the Flash. It was Jean-Marc Lalonde.

I want to say that he has indeed been a superhero to many. His commitment to his riding doesn’t need to be retold, but I want to offer you some of the things that he was able to accomplish: numerous eastern Ontario development fund projects; the Calypso water park; the environmental assessment for Highway 17/174; helping to establish the Canadian International Hockey Academy—world-renowned; the cleanup of the Hawkesbury CIP lagoons; eight new schools and 17 expansions and renovations of schools; and—this one, Premier, between you and me and the Minister of Health, I need to talk to you about my riding—three new family health teams and two community health centres; numerous sewer and water and roads and bridges projects; and many agricultural projects.

It’s amazing to know that a gentleman of this nature has the ability to connect to the people. There isn’t anybody walking down the street whom he doesn’t know by name. The dedication that he has given to his community is only equal to the love of his family.

I offer to him inspirational words that I live by. I see you in this, Jean-Marc:

Take time to think—thoughts are the source of power.

You, sir, are powerful.

Take time to play—play is the secret of perpetual youth—Batman.

Take time to read—reading is the fountain of wisdom.

Take time to pray—prayer can be a rock of strength in times of trouble.

Take time to love—loving is what makes living worthwhile.

You, sir, exude love for your family.

Take time to be friendly—friendships give life a delicious flavour.

Take time to laugh—laughter is the music of the soul.

Take time to give—any day of the year is too short for selfishness.

Take time to do your work well—pride in your work, no matter what it is, nourishes the ego and the spirit.

You work hard, Jean-Marc.

Take time to show appreciation—thanks is the frosting on the cake of life.

This man says thank you to anybody who has done anything for him.

Finally, I leave with you a Gaelic blessing from centuries ago to you and your family:

Deep peace of the running wave to you
Deep peace of the flowing air to you
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you
Deep peace of the shining stars to you
Deep peace of the gentle night to you
Moon and stars pour their healing light on you
Deep peace of Christ the light of the world to you.

Jean-Marc, merci beaucoup.

M. Steve Clark: Il me fait plaisir de faire quelques observations en hommage à mon ami Jean-Marc Lalonde. Il est le député provincial de Glengarry–Prescott–Russell ayant servi le plus longtemps à ce poste.

Avant de se lancer en politique provinciale, il a occupé des postes au sein de l'administration municipale pendant 25 ans, dont 15 ans à titre de maire de la ville de Rockland.

That's when he and I first met, when he was the mayor of Rockland and I was the mayor of Brockville. He had such a wonderful reputation among municipal officials in eastern Ontario. He was known as a man who would not just stand up for Rockland but would stand up and be a vocal advocate for eastern Ontario.

When we leave politics—and when I left municipal politics—you drift away from people. Last year when I was elected MPP and walked up to Jean-Marc, it had been many years since we had talked. We reconnected, and he gave me his big smile and asked me two questions. He asked me how old I was now, because there was a lot of to-do when I was a young mayor, and you know that well, Speaker. I told him last year I was pushing 50.

Then he asked me that second question, and for any of you who know the Legiskaters hockey team, he asked me, was I still playing hockey? I indicated I was, as you can see from a couple of scars from a little aggressive men's league play over the years. Jean-Marc said, "You're on the Legiskaters." As I said a couple of weeks ago, I think I'm the only person ever in Jean-Marc's career that he signed without having a tryout. I'm honoured that I made the team without a tryout.

This place, as we all know, is extremely partisan, but Jean-Marc, with the Legiskaters hockey team over his political career, has brought New Democrats, Liberals and Progressive Conservatives together. I have to tell you, as a new member, going through this place can beat you up a bit. But it's nice to see ourselves outside of this place in the friendly confines of the sport that many of us have played since we were young.

I have to tell you that this man has the same passion for Glengarry–Prescott–Russell that he has for the game of hockey. On behalf of anyone who played—we had a

tribute for Jean-Marc a couple of weeks ago from the Legiskaters hockey team, and I know that anyone who played on that team or was associated with that team thanks you sincerely. We're pretty convinced that we can convince him to come back—not to sit in the place but at least to coach the team, Jean-Marc. I'm sure we can convince you of that.

I want to say just in closing that he takes the same role with the Legiskaters team to get all parties together that he takes in eastern Ontario. He's such a vocal advocate for our communities and all eastern Ontario MPPs, and I'm sure the Premier will agree that Jean-Marc has always put not just the people of Ontario first, not just the people in his riding of Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, but certainly all of the people in eastern Ontario. Thank you for your advocacy, sir. Bonne chance, Jean-Marc.

Applause.

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M^{me} France Gélinas: C'est un honneur pour moi aussi de rendre hommage au député de Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, mon ami Jean-Marc Lalonde. Si jamais il y avait un concours dans l'Assemblée législative pour nommer un gentleman, moi, j'aurais voté pour Jean-Marc.

Jean-Marc est un ardent défenseur de la francophonie. Nous ne sommes pas beaucoup, les francophones dans l'Assemblée législative, donc on se serre les coudes un peu et on a su travailler ensemble pour faire avancer le bien de la province et la francophonie.

Jean-Marc, c'est un homme doux qui lève rarement le ton mais qui a su se faire entendre, qui est devenu la voix de l'Ontario sur la scène internationale à bien, bien des niveaux. Je fais partie, avec lui, de l'Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie. Peu importe où je vais, peu importe quel groupe, ils connaissent tous Jean-Marc et ils savent tous qu'en Ontario, la francophonie existe, parce que Jean-Marc le leur a démontré. Félicitations pour ça.

En travaillant, vraiment, sans tambour ni trompette, il a su faire avancer la position de l'Ontario d'une façon dont on devrait tous être fiers, tant au niveau local, provincial, national et international.

Bien entendu, on va se souvenir de Jean-Marc comme le député qui a fait reconnaître le drapeau franco-ontarien à la grandeur de la province.

Applause.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Oui.

Il faut que je dise qu'il a été créé à Sudbury et levé pour la première fois à Sudbury. Il faut quand même que je dise ça, mais, Jean-Marc, les honneurs te reviennent à toi parce que c'est toi qui l'as fait reconnaître, notre beau drapeau franco-ontarien.

Son amour du hockey est légendaire et on en a entendu parler. Ça aussi, c'est notre ambassadeur partout où on va. On peut être au courant des scores puis on peut être au courant de ce qui se passe dans le milieu du hockey—on a juste à aller voir Jean-Marc; il nous met à jour.

Jean-Marc, je te souhaite plusieurs belles années avec ta famille. Gisèle, je sais que ça va faire différent de

l'avoir à la maison tout le temps comme ça, mais je suis sûre que ça va bien aller.

Félicitations, Jean-Marc; tu vas nous manquer.

Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde: Merci beaucoup à vous tous. Thank you, David; thank you, Steven; and thank you, France. Let me tell you, like my dear friend and colleague Dave Ramsay just said a little while ago, it's not easy to say goodbye to this place. I've worked on this side of the House and I've worked on the other side of the House, and I have to say that I enjoyed every single minute of it. I wish I was 10 years younger. I wish I was 10 years younger because you wouldn't be celebrating or saying goodbye to me with the others tonight. I would still be here for sure because, as I said, I really enjoy what I'm doing.

It's been a privilege and a pleasure to serve the people of Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, and also, I keep saying to my people down my way, I might be your member of provincial Parliament, but I'm also a member of the provincial government, so anything we do—we have to look after our own riding, but I have to make sure that the rest of the province does benefit from whatever we do here in the Ontario Legislature.

Dear friends, I keep saying that I come from one of the most beautiful areas of the province. After all, if you want to get to see the sun, the first one, just come down my way. You'll see the sun before Toronto gets it because the sun rises right down in Glengarry–Prescott–Russell. And one thing also, I'm going to have the IPM this year, the International Plowing Match, and those of you who have never been to the far east, when you get down there, you'll see how well you are served. You might do like the little goats there from Skotidakis farm after they come to Ontario. They just go back like that: "I wish I could stay in Ontario." But you would say, "I wish I could come back to eastern Ontario, to the far east, in Glengarry–Prescott–Russell."

Dear friends, as I said, I enjoy every single minute of it. I have been leaving my hometown most of the time on Sunday night, going back Thursday night or Friday night. But let me tell you, without the support of my wife, I wouldn't be here today.

Yes, I was just counting; we've been married for 19,712 days. Yes, it is 19,712 days; I just counted. My wife, Gisèle, is over there. Would you stand up, Gisèle? I have to tell you that I was in hockey very deeply worldwide at one point. I'll never forget, she kept telling me, "Jean-Marc, if you like it, go ahead." In politics—41 years in politics; on the 8th of June, it's going to make 41 years and I've never seen Gisèle telling me, "Are you not fed up with politics?" No, she encouraged me every time that I would do anything for the constituents, first of all, and I love—I love—giving the services to the people, especially the people of Glengarry–Prescott–Russell. And I go out of my way—Norm Sterling's area; I went over there and I'll be down in the Brockville area very soon. I'm here to serve the people of Ontario, and I love it.

I have two sons, Mario and François. I'll never forget when I was travelling all over the world for hockey: One

of them was five years old and the other one seven. For five years in a row, I was not at home at Christmas and New Year's because the European national team came into Canada. I was appointed ambassador for five years, so I had to travel with them. That was the time they were coming down to North America; I had to travel with them. So my wife was taking care of my two boys and also my mother-in-law, who lived with me until she passed away at the age of 86. I forget the number of years.

Dear friends, yes, I have daughters-in-law who supported me, my brothers and sisters, and my staff. I have to say I have here with me today Lyse Desforges—she's from here at Queen's Park—and Christine Pelletier. Also, today, the fact that GPR day falls on the second of the month of June, we didn't want you to miss any of our goodies from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, so they drove up this morning. They stopped at St. Albert cheese factory to pick up fresh cheese; those people got it today, and I've got people here who came up. My employees Rollande Chenier, Jean-Simon and Rheal Filion all came up, really, to give us a hand today to make sure that you people would taste the good products of Glengarry–Prescott–Russell. By the way, you've got that yogurt cheese from the goats of Skotidakis. The goats are really fed in Ontario, so you should rest assured; you've got good goat yogurt.

I have to say thank you to my association, really, that supported me all the way. Dear friends, I kept saying politics and sports go together. If you don't work as a team, you'll never get anywhere. I've learned that in hockey. I was able to win just about any time that I got involved. And today in Queen's Park I get to work with every one of you, no matter which side.

France just said it: Le drapeau franco-ontarien, the French flag, I never forgot—Decker, what was her name? The House leader?

Interjection.

Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde: Janet Ecker—when Rick Bartolucci asked for a point of order when we debated the second reading for the flag—she asked for a big flag because we needed the support of everyone to have a flag on our desk. We passed it unanimously in this House, and I want to say thank you, thank you, to all of you for showing respect for franco-Ontarians.

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Dear friends, as I said, there are a lot of people that I really enjoy. My adviser for agriculture right here: Anytime I want to hear more about agriculture, I go to Pat. Pat is an expert and my adviser. Carol Price is really the leading lady of this organization.

Applause.

Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde: I think my time has gone, but I just want to tell everyone again: Thank you very, very much for all your co-operation. I have to tell you that the mayors down my way—I have nine mayors, 10 with Ottawa, and I never forget how they all work together. One year we finished with a surplus; the Premier announced that at the AMO conference. I called all

my mayors. If we were going per capita, some municipalities wouldn't have much money. We sat together and I said, "How about if we start working together as a team? We'll make sure that all the money is split properly for each of the municipalities." It was done. Steve Peters did the same thing in his own riding. I remember we were the two ridings that did it, and everybody was pleased.

When it comes time for special projects or funding projects, we all sit together: "Would you support a project for Casselman or Russell or Hawkesbury or Glengarry North?" I have to tell you, Premier, that last Wednesday I made an announcement in Alexandria for the waterworks for North Glengarry. Everybody was crying when we made the announcement. Nobody was expecting to get this announcement. I had advised my people of Prescott and Russell—all the mayors—that my priority was North Glengarry. They all agreed. We support each other. This is what I call teamwork, and in this place the more teamwork we do, the better for all Ontarians, the people of this beautiful province.

Thank you again. I wish every one of you the best success. I love you all.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): On behalf of the Legislative Assembly, Jean-Marc, thank you for your service to the people of Glengarry–Prescott–Russell and to the people of Ontario. We wish you all the best.

MEMBER FOR CAMBRIDGE

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd now like to call on the member from Halton to pay tribute to our good friend, and a good Ukrainian colleague of mine, Gerry Martiniuk, the member from Cambridge.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: It's certainly a privilege tonight to take part in this debate. It's an honour.

Gerry Martiniuk has always struck me as a very senatorial figure. He gives very sage advice, he gives very sober second thought and very sound counsel whenever you ask him for his advice. He was first elected in June 1995 to the riding of Cambridge, North Dumfries and Kitchener. Gerry, being a very conservative chap and economical, shortened that to just Cambridge—his economy stretches even to the alphabet, in using fewer letters.

Gerry's passion has been for the Cambridge Memorial Hospital. Much of his career, as you read his resumé, focuses on that hospital. It started with the CT scanner, which he was able to get for that hospital. Over the term of his office, he has seen the budget for Cambridge Memorial Hospital double from the time he first got elected. That's great for the riding of Cambridge that he works in and for the city of Cambridge, and it's also a pretty good vote-getter.

When the doctor shortage loomed in the city of Cambridge, Gerry formed the Cambridge doctor recruitment program in conjunction with the chamber, the city and, of course, Cambridge Memorial Hospital. That is something that has caught on across the province. He followed up

with a private member's bill, Bill 13, and targeted patient-doctor ratios. In that bill, he also offered tuition breaks for graduating doctors if they went to underserved areas, another idea that has caught on across the province.

The Kitchener hospital has been the focus of his questions, statements in the House, petitions and a private member's bill. His passion for the hospital is unmatched in commitment.

Gerry also co-chaired the Ontario Crime Control Commission in 1997-98. He encouraged sweeping changes to the Young Offenders Act, and he supported the Safe Schools Act, which minimized bullying, another idea that has come of age in the province of Ontario. He supported the Comprehensive Road Safety Act, he worked for tougher impaired driving laws and he introduced an act to protect children from pornography, another idea that is certainly in vogue today. He encouraged opening up access to Ontario's sex offender registry, another idea that is happening today. These are all initiatives finding favour with Ontario's families, and are reflected in legislative initiatives that are current across the country today.

In 2007, he worked to protect civilian jobs of Canadian Forces personnel, another idea that has caught on and taken flight. He also worked on private legislation for diabetes and guide dogs, among other areas, and was honoured in 2007 by the Cambridge Chamber of Commerce with a lifetime achievement award, something that is certainly well deserved.

But Bill 155, which proclaims September 7 as Ukrainian Heritage Day, was perhaps Gerry's crowning glory. That bill was passed in one day with the help of Donna Cansfield and Cheri DiNovo, of the government and the third party. The gallery was packed that day, indeed a very proud day for our member from Cambridge and for Ukrainian heritage folks from across the province.

Gerry is also a very astute investor, and I always looked forward to my little chats. I'd turn around to chat with him and say, "Gerry, what do you think is happening with the price of oil these days?" or "What do you think is happening with the price of gold?" Gerry will never actually offer his opinion, but he'll think about it for a moment and say, "Well, you know, if Greece doesn't do this or if Portugal doesn't do that or the Chinese don't devalue the yuan, their currency, then maybe this or that or the other thing will happen." By and large, I have found that Gerry is not far off the mark most of the time.

We'll miss you, Gerry. I will miss your sage advice, and will miss in you this place. Good luck, and have a great life.

Applause.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: On behalf of New Democrats and our leader, Andrea Horwath, I want to wish you well, Gerry.

I've had the opportunity to sit in committee with you and be part of a number of initiatives that were sometimes started by you and other times supported by you, or other times in your job as critic. The one thing I note is

that people who come into this place have different styles, and yours is one of no guff. You know what you want to do. It's not about making a big show; it's about making sure you put your points forward, and you do that well.

Your colleague spoke well of some of the initiatives you've put forward, and talked a little bit about your experience as an investor, and I appreciate that, being a very bad one. I've got to say that it's always good to get some advice that's better than what I got the day before.

I just want to say that it's been interesting to listen, because what I've noted when we're in committee dealing with clause-by-clause on bills, where you really get into the meat and bone of an issue, and Gerry gets on to something, normally you've got to sit back and say, "What's going on here? Gerry's on to something." Then you've got to listen to the argument, because it's an argument that's thought through. It's not just talking for the sake of talking, but for the sake of trying to make your point and, more importantly, to get the change you want. I think that's something you do quite well.

Obviously, you've done a pretty darned good job in your constituency. You came to this place in 1995, if memory serves me correctly, to our demise and chagrin. To the exaltation of the Conservative Party, your riding association and your constituents, you were elected.

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I note, in watching over the years, in conversations with you but also looking in the media, that you have a lot to be proud of when it comes to some of the accomplishments in your riding because, at the end of the day, that's what this place is all about. We can get all excited about the wonderful things that we do here in the Legislature, but as Tip O'Neill says, politics is local. Tip O'Neill, for those people who don't know, was the Speaker of the American House and wrote a book that is quite an interesting read. But his point is that everything is local, and that's something you've understood.

I was a bit surprised, actually: I thought you were a lot younger. When I looked at your bio—and I'm not going to say what your age is, because you're still pretty young—I was a little bit surprised. I don't know what you're using, but whatever it is, can you please pass it on and share it with some of us? Some of us need it more than you do.

I say, on behalf of New Democrats, job well done. I know that you may not be exactly retiring in the sense of not doing anything, because I know you have a law degree, and you will continue doing something when you leave this place. On behalf of all the members of the assembly, we wish you well.

Hon. John Milloy: It's a great honour for me to stand on behalf of the Liberal Party and pay tribute tonight to Gerry Martiniuk, the member from Cambridge. I have the privilege of thanking him on behalf of our caucus partly because I'm his neighbour. My riding is just to the north of his.

I first met Gerry in our community on what we all like to call the circuit, where we go around from event to

event to event. I certainly met someone who is very warm, friendly and thoughtful, and I've got to tell you, I think he knows everybody in the entire community. At the volunteer service awards, I swear, everyone from Cambridge gives Gerry a hug and a kiss. He seems to know his entire community, which I think is a sign of someone who feels very strongly and has had a great deal of experience, both municipally and, of course, provincially from 1995 forward.

The member from Kitchener–Waterloo isn't here this evening; the member from Wellington–Halton Hills, who used to be part of Waterloo region, and the member from Kitchener–Conestoga are here. I think anyone who has served Waterloo region will know that it's a different kind of place. It's a bit of a hotbed of innovation. It's a hotbed of creativity. We have a bit of a different political culture there. What that political culture is—and I see Ted and Leeanna will nod their head—is you check partisanship at the door. In fact, when you get elected, the first thing you learn is, if you want to make a lot of enemies around town, start being partisan, start being overly in the face of people. What you have to do is adopt a real attitude of teamwork, that we're all part of the same team and that we're all here to work for the community. I've got to tell you that Gerry's style fit in so well there in Waterloo region. Although I know Gerry is a very proud Progressive Conservative, Gerry did not wear his partisanship on his sleeve. He was someone who always put the interests of the community first and always put Waterloo region first.

As I mentioned, he has a proud municipal background. He was a city councillor. He then moved on to provincial politics, where he has worked very, very hard for the interests of our community. He has seen Waterloo region transform into, really, an economic powerhouse, and he has been involved in a number of issues. Ted Chudleigh, the member from Halton, spoke about them in terms of health care and in terms of transportation. One that he didn't mention that I know we'd be remiss if we didn't mention is Gerry's accomplishment of the establishment of the school of architecture in Cambridge, a satellite of the University of Waterloo, an initiative that I know Gerry was involved with and was very proud of.

The thing about Gerry is he has this ability to link Queen's Park to the community. When we come to Queen's Park and see private member's time and petition time, it seems to be a little bit of inside baseball. But Gerry had this knack, and you just have to follow the local media, of being able to turn causes that he was promoting at Queen's Park into causes in our community. It seemed that every Friday, as I was driving around, I'd turn on the radio and hear Gerry being interviewed about a new petition that he had started in his constituency office, asking people to come sign it. Oftentimes, it was not one that I'd want to sign, but he was certainly getting lots of publicity.

Of course, the other area where he was able to make a real mark, both in our community and in Queen's Park, was in the area of private members' bills. I know Ted

Chudleigh shared a few of them, but I have a longer list: strengthening Ontario's tobacco laws for minors, protecting the civilian jobs of military personnel, requiring elementary school staff to be trained to monitor children with diabetes, allowing people with a wider range of disabilities to use guide dogs in public, and of course Ukrainian Heritage Day, Bill 155, which he was so proud to see passed.

I want, on behalf of this side of the House, to do a number of things tonight: to wish Gerry well, obviously, in his retirement; to thank him for his service to the community and his service at Queen's Park; and also to say on behalf of all of us in Waterloo region, Gerry, although we know you're retiring from politics, we know that you're not retiring from public service. I know that you're going to continue to make a strong contribution to Cambridge and to all of Waterloo region. Thank you.

Mr. Gerry Martiniuk: Thanks to Ted and Gilles and John for those kind words. I'd like to dedicate what I have to say to my four children, Andrew, Kirsten, Seth and Ivan. My speech will now be a lot shorter, because you've itemized all the things I was going to say. You'll be pleased to hear that.

It's with mixed emotions that I rise today and make my final statement in the Ontario Parliament after 16 years and look forward to my future. With my pending retirement from provincial politics, I want to take the opportunity to thank my PC colleagues, all members of the Legislature and all civil servants, including the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly and her staff, for their support and guidance over the past 16 years. Together I believe we have made our province and country a better place to work and raise families.

I wish to pay tribute to the people of Cambridge and North Dumfries, who have enriched my career immensely. The suggestions and feedback received from my constituents have assisted and motivated me in representing their needs here at Queen's Park.

My career has been enriched thanks to so many partners, including the political, business and labour leaders from my riding who have worked with me on many occasions to bring about positive change for our community.

I leave my position as MPP with many memories, not the least of which is the repeated efforts by myself and my community to see the commissioned, legally ordered expansion of Cambridge Memorial Hospital completed. It's been a committed and arduous effort that spanned most of my 16 years as an MPP, and one that continues today. But one thing I've learned in politics is that it's persistence, not good looks, that counts.

In my role as MPP, I have continued to be impressed with the dedication of volunteers in my community. I'm so proud of the many volunteers who give of their most precious commodity, their personal time, for the benefit of our community.

During my years as MPP, I've celebrated much growth in the riding, including a substantial and rapid increase in population, new schools, additional long-term-care beds, increased hospital operating funding, increased grants to our municipalities and the establishment of the

University of Waterloo's school of architecture. With the assistance of many partners, including the Cambridge Chamber of Commerce, I established the Cambridge and North Dumfries doctor recruitment committee in an attempt to solve the severe doctor shortage that was being felt by our community. Since its inception in the year 2000, they have recruited over 59 new family physicians to our community, and the waiting list is now very short indeed.

Sometimes ideas are embraced, and other times they are not. On one occasion in 2007, I introduced a private member's bill to protect civilian jobs of Canadian Forces reservists who volunteer for active peacekeeping duty. I prompted the government to adopt the idea. There was agreement, and soon after the government introduced legislation similar to that which I had proposed, as a private bill would not have been passed in time, even if it did pass third reading, simply because the contingent from Ontario was leaving within two months. Today, thousands of brave and deserving military reservists are guaranteed job protection.

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More recently, with the support of three parties, we celebrated the passing of a bill that establishes that September 7 of each year be proclaimed Ukrainian Heritage Day. Though not all private bills are passed into law, they do serve to raise the awareness of issues that are important in Ontario. A few of my own bills that come to mind: a proposal for the use of anti-porn Internet filtering software on computers in schools and libraries; a proposal to have elementary schoolteachers trained in the monitoring and treatment of children with diabetes; and a proposal to make it illegal for persons under 19 to buy and smoke cigarettes.

In closing, I would like to express what an honour and privilege it has been to serve as a member for Cambridge and North Dumfries. I thank my constituents and the members of the Cambridge Progressive Conservative Association for their loyalty in supporting me for four elections over 16 years. As none of my success would have happened without the assistance of my friends and work associates, I thank you, Maria Pimentel, Carol-Ann Nugent-Breton, Joyce Buell, Karen Kroezen, Martin Gamble, Nadine McCormick and Jag Riyait.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Mr. Martiniuk, on behalf of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, we want to say thank you for your service to the citizens of Cambridge and the citizens of Ontario. We wish you all the best in your future endeavours.

MEMBER FOR PICKERING— SCARBOROUGH EAST

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd now like to call on Minister without Portfolio Gerry Phillips to lead the tribute to the member from Pickering-Scarborough East, Wayne Arthurs.

Hon. Gerry Phillips: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Just because of something that Bruce Crozier and Pat Hoy said, if you will allow me: I love my wife, too.

I was looking very bad there. I would have been in big trouble, and rightly so.

I'm honoured to have a chance to say a few words about my good friend Wayne. Working and living in Toronto, you knew about a very impressive mayor on the east end of Metro, the mayor of Pickering. When I think of Wayne Arthurs, one word comes to my mind: solid, a very solid individual. He was on the Pickering council, I think, from 1982. You were mayor, Wayne, from 1988 to 2003—I think the longest-serving mayor of Pickering. I can't tell you how happy we were when we were able to persuade you to run provincially. Wayne had a fabulous reputation as a mayor in a rapidly growing municipality, with all of the challenges of it.

Wayne got elected here in 2003, and then I was lucky enough to have him as my parliamentary assistant. I was Chair of Management Board at the time and I couldn't have asked for better help than Wayne provided. Nobody around here, in my opinion, Wayne, is more solid than you are. Wayne was just a great help to me.

People don't even realize some of the things that Wayne did. He did a study called *Doing Business with the Ontario Government*. Many of us go out and talk to businesses and they say, "I don't know how to do business with the government." So Wayne went out and did a terrific study, entitled *Doing Business with the Ontario Government*, that we still use to this day. We travel around the province trying to help businesses understand how to do business with government.

Wayne then became the parliamentary assistant to finance, which is a pretty good, a pretty important position. He did some great work on pensions and things like that, which we've now built into our legislation.

Wayne's the kind of guy I love to work with. Around here, when problems come at us, some of us can kind of magnify the problems. Wayne gets at the problem. He doesn't panic. He brings a calmness to it. He's looking for a solution. He kind of peels back the irrelevant and the smoke, lays out the problem and comes to a solution. Wayne, I really appreciate that; recently we worked together on a committee. That's an enormous talent of yours, to find solutions to problems that lots of us kind of want to wallow in for a while; you want to get on and solve them.

He and his wife, Susan, are terrific. They're planning and living the ideal life, in my opinion—I'm living the ideal life, too, but—

Interjections.

Hon. Gerry Phillips: I'm going to have a little more time to visit you and Susan in Arizona. But they are the perfect couple. Susan's sitting back there. It's great to see you, Susan. You've been a great help to Wayne.

Wayne, I hope you leave here with a terrific sense of satisfaction, not just for what you've accomplished here but for what you've done out in Pickering for the community. As I say, in my opinion, there's no one around

here more solid than Wayne. Nobody can find solutions better than you do.

On behalf of our caucus, I want to wish you the very, very best, you and Susan. Thank you very much.

Mrs. Christine Elliott: I'm really honoured to join this tribute tonight to our friend and colleague Wayne Arthurs, who's going to be retiring from politics after nearly three decades of public service at both the municipal and provincial levels.

We all know, Wayne, that you've been a tireless and ongoing advocate for your riding of Pickering-Scarborough East. I can also say, as a fellow Durham region member, that Wayne has been a very congenial person to work with, even though we haven't always shared the same political views. We've even gotten along on political talk shows. So I think it really speaks to the ability you have to work together with people, not only to the betterment of your own riding, but to be able to see Durham region as a whole and the work that we need to do together, whether it's with respect to the college, the university, our hospitals or to other regional issues where you've been able to see the bigger picture. I really thank you for that, as a fellow Durham region member.

I would like to say just a few words about some of the things that I know you've done here and the importance of that in the great scheme of things. I was very proud to support you in your private member's bill with respect to visual fire alarms. I think that really speaks very well to your tenacity, in bringing it forward on three successive occasions, to be that tireless advocate for people who don't always have a voice—literally, in this case—but to be able to be the voice for people with disabilities. It's something that I think you and I share and many of the other members of this Legislature share together. We all come here wanting to be the voice for everyone in our communities, and I think you've done a wonderful job with that.

On a local level, I know that you've played a prominent role in many things, among other things revolutionizing and upgrading Pickering's waterfront, and it really is a lovely place to be. I've visited it myself many times, and you've done a terrific job with that. At the provincial level, I know you were also instrumental in the redevelopment of the Pickering and Ajax campus of the Rouge Valley hospital. All of these have been important and invaluable contributions over the years to your fellow citizens.

On behalf of the Progressive Conservative Party and your colleagues here in the Legislature, I'd like to thank you for all the work that you've done. I wish you and Susan all the best in the many adventures that await you in the future.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Wayne, where are you going? I want to say a couple of things on behalf of the caucus and our leader, Andrea Horwath.

A personal observation in regards to Wayne is that he and I have had the opportunity to sit on what we call the board of infernal economy, where we overlook a number of decisions about how this place is run, or is not run

sometimes. I've got to say that in our time there, there were conversations—which I can't use in this speech—that we had at the board that would be plenty funny to talk about tonight, but I will stay away from those particular conversations.

But I want to say this: Wayne, you're one of those fellows, and it was said by Gerry, who comes at a problem trying to find a solution. That was clear in conversations that we've had at the board. It was certainly clear on the pension committee that we both sit on in regard to members' investments. Unbeknownst to most people outside of this place, there is no pension for provincial members of parliament; we're RRSP-based. Wayne, along with my colleague Ted Chudleigh and I, sits on the committee that oversees those people who make investment decisions for our measly RRSPs that we give to every month. But I've got to say that he has served this House well on that particular issue, because we've just gone through a process of picking a new organization to manage our RRSPs, and Wayne brought some insights that I thought were quite useful.

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It's what Gerry said earlier, that some people come to this thing wanting to do the glitz and the glamour. I'm sure that you do some of that in your own way. I don't want to take away from things that you might have done in your riding that I don't know about, but certainly you come bringing solutions. I've sat with you at committee and have observed that on committee you tend not to be too partisan, which I do appreciate, because I think sometimes that's lost on some of us. We all have our politics, and come the next election, I will be as partisan as the next person—as will everybody else in this House—but in the times in between, I think the model that Wayne brings, and a few other members who are leaving this place tonight, are those attributes, which make for a good member.

I started off by asking, "Where are you going?" because I do know that you have plenty of interests and plenty of things to do once you leave this place. As we've spoken about before, you understand there is life after Queen's Park, and we wish you well in your second life.

Mr. Wayne Arthurs: I'm going to have my glasses on and off. They don't work as well as they used to.

First, some years ago, someone gave me some advice, and it spoke to the fact that a good political speech really has to be focused on three "be"s: Be sincere, be brief and be seated. I know the clock is going to take care of the second one, and if I don't pay attention to it, your standing will take care of the third one, and I'll use my four and a half minutes or so to be sincere.

I want to first thank Gerry and Christine and Gilles and, through them, their caucuses and our caucus on this side, for those tributes and for those comments and for the opportunity to work with you, whether it be on community initiatives or on committees, whether it be a standing committee, a legislative committee, a select committee, with all of those in the House I've had the

opportunity to do that with over the time I've been here. That has really been a pleasure, and it has been probably, as many will say, the best part of the job sometimes for, as I said, the opportunity to do that across the floor in particular that may not present itself.

I want to say to the Premier, I came here in 2003, and I came here for a reason at that point in time. It was because I believed in some of the principles—or all the principles, but two or three primarily—that you espoused on behalf of our party at that time. It was that public service is an honourable profession, whether that's in elected office or those in career public service. I believe that. I know that you believe that. I know the people in this House believe that. As well, you espoused that health and education, at all levels, were important to Ontarians. For me, they were important cornerstones of community, as I came from that local level. It was for those two reasons in particular that I chose to run in 2003 and chose to run again in 2007.

In addition, in being in this place, I've heard you say on many occasions—I'll paraphrase—that what we do here should be to ensure that we leave this place better for our children and grandchildren. That's the most basic reason and principle that I am here for, and I thank you for bringing those particular issues of leadership to this place and providing me an opportunity to work with you, with government, in this place, to move those agendas forward.

I want to thank the ministers I've had a chance to work with during my time here: Minister Phillips, Minister Sorbara, Minister Duncan—those finance ministers couldn't keep a job; it was a good thing they had a strong PA—and finally, Minister Smith during this past year or so, as I've begun to wind down what I'm doing here as well.

I want to thank my wife, Susan, and my family for their support over the past 29 years this fall in continuous elected service. I really started slightly before that with an attempt at election to council in 1980, unsuccessfully, and I had the bug at that point; the virus took hold and it never let go. I thank my wife, Susan, and our four children, who are now scattered across this province and country, from Prescott to Oshawa to Waterloo to Calgary, Alberta, and our eight grandchildren; to see them now becomes increasingly a challenge because of the distances they live at.

My kids would be hard-pressed to remember a time when the name "Arthurs" was not preceded either by "councillor," "mayor" or "MPP." As I think back on those things, that's the life they grew up with, and I know it's the life that children in this place, the children of these members, grow up with. It's part of what we do, but it's part of what they do.

I'd like to have more time to be able to say thank you to my staff, the riding associations, both Pickering-Scarborough East and Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge from the prior term of office, the volunteers and supporters I've had for three decades, the colleagues I've had locally, regionally and here in this place during these eight

years. I can do that very briefly by speaking to three individuals, and not to any extent but to be representative of that support.

The current mayor of the city of Pickering, Dave Ryan, whom I coaxed and encouraged along, has become my successor, and whom I've been proud of and proud that I played a part in his career and what he's doing for his community. And thus my colleagues provincially, regionally or locally.

Community volunteers and supporters: Rod Mason, who was there—he and his wife, Anne—from the time I first sought political office in 1980 and have continuously supported me throughout the time forward, as the town and the city of Pickering grew. So, for all of those supporters.

One other gentleman named Edmond Manneh, who, from 1988 to 2007, through seven elections, did that job that no campaign can get by without—they'll often do it quietly and unseen. They do all the hard work after election day. That was my CFO, and each of us has to pay tribute as elected officials to the work they do. So, to Ed or Edmond Manneh, thank you for that.

My final comment, as my time has run out—and I've had some fun in the past few weeks, talking to some of my colleagues in this corner. Premier, you may not want to leave the same groups of people for so long in the same place, because if you look at this corner, we've managed to do some damage in the context of who's leaving.

People have asked, "Why, at this point, are you leaving? You shouldn't be ready." Others will say, "You've been around too long," but others would say, "You still have a lot to give, a lot to serve, etc." Let me put it this way, if I could: The sun came out today; good weather, good friends, good health, goodbye.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): To Wayne Arthurs, the member for Pickering–Scarborough East, thank you. Thank you for your service to your constituents. Thank you for your service to the citizens of Ontario.

MEMBER FOR STORMONT-DUNDAS— SOUTH GLENGARRY

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd now like to call on the member from London–Fanshawe to begin the tribute to the member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, Jim Brownell.

Mr. Khalil Ramal: Tonight, I'm privileged and honoured to speak on behalf of our caucus to pay tribute to my friend and colleague Jim Brownell.

Jim Brownell, as a young man, started his career as a teacher because he loved to educate people in Ontario, and he became a principal. After that, he thought he should give back to his community. He got elected as a councillor to represent his region. After a while, he became deputy reeve, and after a while, he became the reeve.

He also wanted to give back to his community in a larger scope. He served on commissions of parks and the library to manage many different issues in his region because he was deeply rooted in his community and he loved it. He also wanted to give back on a big scale.

In 2003, he decided to run for office and come to Toronto to represent his community in the same fashion and the same way because he wanted to give back to his community.

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Accidentally, when he got elected—we were elected together in the same year—his office was across from my office. Also accidentally, we both had competitive assistants. Our assistants used to compete among each other about who was going to do more statements. They used to run down to Carol Price and ask her to give us an opportunity to speak in this beautiful and magnificent place. Quickly, we learned that the competition was not between me and Jim; I guess it was between our assistants.

Jim Brownell became a friend, and we used to share so many different stories. He came to my riding many different times to support me on many different issues. He came to the pioneer village; remember, he has a deep passion about the history of this province. I know, Speaker, that he came to your riding because he cares about many different issues concerning former Premiers who died, and that the graveyards should be saved and should be preserved because they did a lot for this beautiful province.

Jim Brownell loved history very well, and he maintained his connections to history. He knows about all of the historic locations in the province of Ontario in detail. He can tell you every location, the history of every spot and every pioneer village across the province of Ontario, with details.

My colleague Jim loves people so much, and he loves his students. He would very often invite them to this beautiful place and show them around and entertain them. Very often, he would bring them down here and introduce them to all of us. He speaks proudly about them. One of them is a police officer; one of them is a teacher; one of them works in the local community; and all speak about his accomplishments as teacher, what he did for his community and for the youth of this province.

Jim Brownell very often brought many different youth from different parts of the province who wanted to learn about politics in this place. He offered them all the support they need. He gave them the chance to learn about the process of this place. He brought them also to this place and engaged them with many different activities. He introduced them to all of us, to the caucus members. He introduced them in a big way and gave them a chance and hope to become a member of this Legislature.

Mr. Brownell had many different issues to deal with when he came to this place. He had an issue about British home children because he was connected to this issue through his grandmother, who came to Halifax in

September 1891. He struggled with this issue. He introduced it to this House in the form of a private member's bill twice until finally the bill was recognized and passed. Congratulations, Jim.

Also, everybody knows he introduced a bill giving Ontario one day in February as a vacation day, called heritage day—later on, it became Family Day, which is well known across the province of Ontario as McGuinty's day—to give people some kind of break in the gloomy and cold weather to take a break and relax with their families without any obligations or duties.

Jim, on behalf of all of us in this place, I want to thank you for your friendship and for your passion about whatever you touch, whatever you deal with. We'll all miss you. My best wishes to you and to your family and your wife. I know you like your grandkids a lot, and you love your wife, and you want to spend more time with them. Good luck; I wish you all the success.

Mr. Norm Miller: It's my pleasure and honour to say some words about the MPP for Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, Jim Brownell. Jim is a graduate of the University of Ottawa and holds a bachelor of arts, bachelor of education and a master's of education. He was a teacher with the Upper Canada District School Board for 32 years. He also served his community for many years—14, in fact—as councillor, deputy reeve and reeve in the township of Cornwall and the township of South Stormont.

He found many ways to give back to his community, as was noted by the member from London–Fanshawe. In December 2000, he was appointed to a three-year term as commissioner with the St. Lawrence Parks Commission. In 2001, Jim was awarded the Ontario Heritage Foundation's Heritage Community Recognition Award. And in 2010, his community honoured him with the Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal. He was elected to the Ontario Legislature in 2003 and re-elected in 2007.

He is married to Paulette Charlebois, and together they have two daughters, Jennifer and Alison. He's also the proud grandfather of Emma and Kate.

Jim has sponsored a number of bills during his tenure in the Ontario Legislature, and two have effectively become law. One, as was noted, is the British Home Child Day Act, which, with the assistance of the members from Leeds–Grenville and Parkdale–High Park, received royal assent on May 19, 2011; also, Bill 25, the Gravesites of Former Premiers Act, 2006, which was not passed into law but is currently being implemented by the Ontario Heritage Trust. As has been mentioned, he has a keen interest in history. I had the pleasure of meeting Jim in Gravenhurst when he came promoting his private member's bill, and we had a very nice meeting by the gravesite of my father in Gravenhurst, where he knew more about the graveyard than I did.

Jim, I think, is a non-partisan politician who worked quietly on projects of interest to him and did make a difference. That particular private member's bill, I have a particular interest in. I'm glad to see that it's come into effect and look forward to it spreading around the province.

On behalf of the PC caucus, I would like to congratulate you on the good work you've done here at Queen's Park. I hope that you and Paulette enjoy many years together in your retirement from politics and as you embark on your next career adventure, whatever that may be. So congratulations, and thank you for your good work.

M^{me} France Gélinas: It is my pleasure to say a few words to the member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, Jim Brownell.

Jim was a schoolteacher before he joined the Legislative Assembly, but I would say that even after he joined the Legislative Assembly, he continued to be a teacher: in the way that he dealt with people, in his love of knowledge and of learning, and in his ease of sharing with it the people around him. I would say that he can best be described as a very nice man.

Jim understands that politics is local, and this is how he has lived his responsibility as an MPP day in and day out: by making his riding, making his constituents his number one priority in everything that he did, in the House and back home. He is what I call a grassroots politician.

He's also a family man, and he has made it clear, since he announced his retirement from this House, that he wants to spend more time with his family and more time with his grandkids. I salute you for this. I think you're making the right decision. Grandchildren are very precious.

Congratulations on the British Home Child Day Act, which finally passed. I must say that I learned a lot when I reviewed what had been said in the House about this act. I didn't know what had happened to those children, and it was certainly a very worthy endeavour to recognize them with a day.

I read some of the quotes from when you announced your retirement, and you were proud of 55 projects that you have been involved with, specifically for your riding. This is quite an accomplishment. It goes from a local health centre to rehabilitation of the Long Sault Parkway to the construction of the Upper Canada Village Discovery Centre, as well as water and waste water projects, and the list goes on and on.

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Jim, thank you for all of your hard work and your dedication to your job as an MPP. You will be missed.

Mr. Jim Brownell: First of all, I would like to thank my friends Khalil, Norm and France for your kind words.

I think back to the words that Khalil mentioned about being up in the west wing, the third floor of the west wing, and we certainly had some good times up there. I'm going to name the two folks who worked with us: Scott Bowman working in your office and Erika Mozes in mine. Yes, there was quite a competition for state-ments, and they were always down at Carol's office. Carol Price certainly saw a lot of those two folks, and they certainly served us so well. It's great to have had that opportunity to encourage young people to move onward and upward, and both those folks did.

To my friend Norm Miller: Yes, it was absolutely, absolutely a wonderful experience, and it was my pleas-

ure to go up and meet your family at the gravesite of your dad, a great parliamentarian and a great leader in this province. I was so grateful for the opportunity to promote that bill. It never passed, and I'll never forget when the Premier walked up to my seat when I was sitting over in the rump and congratulated me and said, "Unfortunately, your bill won't go through, but the Ontario Heritage Trust will pick up this project." I'm very appreciative of that and very thankful that we've now recognized over half of the deceased Premiers, and we will continue on with that project.

This evening I certainly want to speak, and I speak through the television tonight. My family couldn't be here. Certainly I want to say to my mom, who I hope is watching—I know it's past her bedtime; she is in the hospital, but she said she was going to watch, and if she's watching I certainly say hello to her. She has been my rock and she has so inspired me, as did my dad. My dad has been gone for 38 years. He never saw any of my political experiences, whether it be municipally or here, provincially. He has been gone for 38 years. Earle and Catherine Brownell raised 12 kids; I was number 2. They worked extremely hard on the farm. The work ethic that I have tried to show in my life has been the work ethic that they instilled in me as a young man growing up on the farm. I can say that my mom has been a widow for 38 years, and with eight kids at home, Mom, you've done a remarkable job, and I want to say thank you publicly.

To my wife Paulette: We were—in elementary school, not sweethearts then, but we certainly developed a friendship after high school, and she has been a solid supporter. She's not that interested in politics. I can tell you that there was a great sigh of relief in her voice and in her experience when I decided in 2000 to pack in a teaching career and go into municipal politics. She thought it would be clear sailing, that here we would go off and do all of those volunteer things in the community and enjoy some travel and whatnot, never to expect that I would be encouraged to run and in 2003 arrive here at Queen's Park. But I can tell you, the day that she said, "Yes, I know it's something that you want to do, Jim, and I'll give you my full support"—that was all I needed.

For eight years she has put up with so much, as have my children. Jennifer and Alison have just been so supportive and so helpful, along with my son-in-law, Josh, and they have blessed me while I was here at Queen's Park with two little granddaughters.

Premier, I'll never forget when you came down to my home in 2007, the Saturday before the election. It was Thanksgiving Saturday when you came into my backyard with those 300 people assembled for a barbecue. When you looked at my granddaughter, I knew then that this probably would be my last session at Queen's Park. It was your comments to me then and your comments to me after with regard to not only my family, but with regard to health—your health being important. As you know, I've experienced some problems this past little while with arthritis, and then that heart issue in 2009 certainly sent me for a loop. Those things are what played in my mind as I decided that it was time for me to say goodbye

to this House, goodbye to the experience that the electorate of Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry and, before that, Charlottenburgh—for all those who could not get their tongues around that word. The electorate gave me that opportunity to come here to Queen's Park and to share.

France mentioned the long list of accomplishments. Yes, it is a long list, and you know, there were some very, very trying times with that long list too, especially in 2006. That phone call on the morning when Domtar Fine Papers in my riding went down, the phone call the Premier gave to me that morning of encouragement and support, and the opportunities that I've had since to work along with my municipal partners and my federal partner to turn the city of Cornwall around—that's something that I shall never forget.

I wanted to speak to Lou Rinaldi. I love what has happened in health care in my riding, and George Smitherman and Deb Matthews have certainly supported all that I'm so proud of in health care. But the rural roots of my riding and the opportunity to give back through the eastern Ontario development fund—Lou, I was an absolute proud signatory to that letter that we in eastern Ontario signed, and I can say thank you for giving me that opportunity to sign that letter, because it was wonderful.

I have gone on perhaps too long, but I want to say, back in my riding, the folks who have helped me out so much: Julie St. Denis, Sharon Kingsley, Heine Bruining, Ruby Antle, Francine Lamothe, Jeremy Gowsell, Kimberly Vass, Alex deWit—they have done super work in my office. And here at Queen's Park: Erika Mozes, Andrew Mitchell, Craig Carter Edwards, Kerry Towndrow, Brian Kulick, Andrew Campbell, Christine Shaver, Amanda Mayer, Brittney Gellately—amazing young people.

I know Bruce Crozier was talking about encouraging those people to move onward and upward in life. I did that in education for 32 and a half years, I did it here at Queen's Park, and I can tell you for those folks and the two summer students that I had, Stacy Makinson and Colin Munro—you have been amazing people, and you continue to be amazing people in my life. Thank you so much for that opportunity, and thank you to everyone in this House and in all the offices at Queen's Park for what you've done for me in my eight years at Queen's Park. Thank you very much. *Merci beaucoup.*

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Jim Brownell, on behalf of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, thank you. Thank you for your service to the constituents of Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry and, as well, your service to the citizens of Ontario.

MEMBER FOR NIPISSING

DÉPUTÉE DE NIPISSING

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd now like to ask the Minister of Health, Deb Matthews, as we lead our tribute to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and

the government House leader, Monique Smith—and remember, it's "Moh-niq," not "Monique."

Hon. Deborah Matthews: There is so much to say, and so little time. I will use my two minutes and try not to do too much more than that.

When I think about Monique, I think of someone who has never, ever lost sight of what an enormous honour and enormous responsibility it is to have a seat in this place, to have earned the trust of our community and to bring the voice of our community to this place. How privileged we all are to be in this House today.

I have no doubt in my mind that that sense of honour and reverence for this place was instilled in Monique from a very young age by her father, Dick Smith, who of course was a former member here, and her mother, the truly wonderful and beautiful Marthe. Monique's family is so very important to her. We know her as a House leader, as a minister, but I tell you, to the people who really matter, she is Auntie Niq: she is Auntie Niq to Katie, to Michael, to Sophie, to Beatrice and to Abigail, and those of us who consider Monique a friend enjoy the photographs of those nieces and nephews.

2200

So who is Monique Smith? Monique Smith is a woman who gives it her all. She is passionate, she is determined, she is brilliant, she is tireless, she is tenacious: I know of no one who works harder than Monique Smith.

I could also tell you that Monique Smith has a wicked—and I mean wicked—sense of humour. I can tell you that she is devoted to getting for the people of her riding the very, very best. In fact, it can be argued that there is no MPP in the history of the Ontario Legislature who has delivered more to her riding in so short a time than Monique Smith. Let's just look at what she has delivered: not just one, but two brand new hospitals—one in North Bay and one in Mattawa. But that wasn't enough for Monique; she needed to deliver a new MRI to North Bay as well. She has delivered a beautiful new children's treatment centre, One Kids Place, and I know that Monique's heart is very much at One Kids Place. She has delivered a nurse practitioner-led clinic, and not just one but two family health teams—Blue Sky and one in Powassan.

Monique brings to this place the voice of her constituents for sure, but she I think brings a special passion when she speaks for those who do not normally always have their voice heard. I am thinking particularly of Monique talking about the concerns of people living in poverty in her community, especially people who are associated with LIPI—Lana Mitchell and others.

She has done so much for her riding, but she has done so much for Ontario as well. I've already used up my time, but I am going to particularly talk about the work she did as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. I can tell you that when Monique took on the issue of quality of care in our long-term-care homes, she began a revolution. I can tell you with absolute confidence that every single person in

long-term care in this province is getting significantly better care as a result of the work that Monique has done.

Applause.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: She has left a lasting legacy not just in her own community, but also right across this province.

Monique, your future is bright. You are young to be getting out of here. Whatever the future holds, we wish you the very, very best. Please know Ontario is a much better place for you having been here.

Mr. Ted Arnott: I'm pleased to have this opportunity on behalf of our caucus to wish Monique Smith all the best in her pending retirement from the Legislature.

As we pay tribute tonight to the MPPs who are retiring from this place, I think it's necessary to recognize the attributes, the work habits and the spirit of public service that brought them here in the first place. Successful MPPs are in general the ones who do their homework. They are the ones who pay attention to their communities, to their responsibilities as MPPs or ministers, as the case may be, showing respect for every single person and responding to their calls and emails, and doing their work and helping any way they can.

Our colleague Monique Smith certainly understands this. She understands the need to take an active role meeting and working with those who need her help. That's what she did when she worked so hard in support of the North Bay Regional Health Centre, as well as the new hospital for Mattawa. That's what she did when, as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health, she travelled the province to hear directly from those who live and work in our nursing homes, with a view to making things better. That's what she did when advocating for literacy programs, poverty reduction programs and many other worthwhile causes and organizations too numerous to mention that directly benefit the people of her riding of Nipissing.

That's what Monique did when, as Minister of Tourism, she responded to my request to visit Wellington-Halton Hills to help address a major tourism issue that mattered to our community. She took an interest, made the extraordinary effort to visit our riding, met with the staff at the affected organization and did what she could to resolve it. For that, I'm still very grateful. That's the way it should work around here.

I was also very pleased when she came to visit Wellington-Halton Hills on another, more celebratory occasion, to officially open the Fergus Highland Games. To the many organizers and volunteers involved in the games, it meant a great deal to have the Minister of Tourism present.

I should point out that I was at that time Monique's critic, but I wasn't the most critical critic she might have had from our side; I like her too much for that. Elections have their time and place, but between elections I believe we have to work together to get things done. Because I wanted our tourism industry to succeed, it followed that I wanted the Minister of Tourism to succeed, and she did. I wanted this because it's in the interest of our province and our people.

Throughout that time, I always found that Monique did her homework. She carried out her responsibilities with dedication and professionalism. She is straightforward and honest, taking her responsibilities seriously, whether in a House leaders' meeting or the Board of Internal Economy. She did so in the best traditions not only of Queen's Park but also of her own family. Her father, the long-serving MPP Dick Smith, represented the same riding that she represents today. One might say that Monique, born in the middle of her father's first provincial election campaign, was born to serve. She has done that and she has done it very well.

Monique, it seems just like yesterday that you arrived. These eight years have gone by so fast. We will miss you, and we wish you congratulations and happy travels.

M^{me} France Gélinas: It is my pleasure to say a few words on the MPP from Nipissing, Monique Smith. Monique has had a very distinguished career as an MPP, whether we look at her work as PA to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, her work as Minister of Revenue or as Minister of Tourism. Then she became Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs.

But for some unknown reason, she then got severely punished. What do I mean by this? She became House leader. She is such a nice person. Why would anybody punish her and force her, week after week, to have those long House leader meetings, which mean one on one, pretty much, with Peter Kormos? I don't know what you have done, but you did not deserve that. You've had a wonderful career. You've advanced the causes in a list of accomplishments; the Minister of Health certainly went through a list of them. But then you have this. We'll forget about this and focus on all the happy things you've done at Queen's Park.

First of all, you were instrumental with the new hospital in North Bay and the hospital in Mattawa—the MRI. The children's treatment centre in North Bay is equal to none; a very good job. Cam's Place is certainly something that you can put your name on, helping people with severe disabilities. The PADDLE centre is also something that you have left your mark on. You've been generous with your time, with your knowledge, with your skills. You certainly represent women in northeastern Ontario in a way that I can aspire to for sure, and you have been a wonderful aunt to all your nieces and nephews. I know they will appreciate having you a little bit more accessible.

Merci beaucoup, Monique, pour toute ta contribution à cette Assemblée et à notre province, pour tous les efforts, ton temps, ton énergie. Félicitations. Huit ans, c'est beaucoup que tu nous a offert, et on te remercie du fond du coeur.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: In this job we all spend a lot of time at retirement dinners and graduations, where we get to sit and listen to long speeches about people that we sometimes don't know that well. Tonight, I want to thank all of you for staying here until after 10 and saluting those of us who are leaving this place. It means a lot to us, and I think it is a reflection of this place that so many of you are here tonight to pay tribute to your

colleagues, me among them. I appreciate it, and I know that all of our colleagues do as we head into the long hours. I just want to say thank you for that.

In particular, I want to thank my boss for being here tonight and for putting in the long hours, because you could have gone by now, but you're hanging in there for the shorter-term gang. We appreciate that very much.

I was the one who was going to cry; I know you guys all had the bet that I was the one who was going to go fast.

I have been in and out of this place many times, but I've been in and out of this place in a paid capacity three times.

2210

Interjection: Page.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: Page: I was a page when I was 12. As I like to remind them as often as I possibly can, I was here as a page when Mr. Bradley and Mr. Sterling were here as members.

It makes me feel so good. I want you all to know that Mr. Bradley was, in fact, singing under his breath earlier during Deb Matthews's tribute, which was so lovely, Deb; thank you. He was singing Helen Reddy, "I am woman, hear me roar...." It was a classic moment and a special moment for me. Thank you to Jim for that tonight.

I returned in 1997 as Dalton's chief of staff. He had just become the leader of the official opposition and asked me to join him as his chief of staff. What a privilege that was. I left McCarthy's. Many wondered about leaving my professional career as a lawyer at a big Bay Street firm but I wouldn't have done anything differently. It was a fabulous experience, and I thank Dalton for that and for the confidence he showed in me then and allowed me to serve as chief of staff with many other members, some of whom are receiving tributes tonight. I was here, back then, as a staffer and obviously had the privilege to serve with them as a member.

In 2002, I turned my mind—having worked with the Association of Canadian Publishers for a few years—to public service again as I was literally born into it, as Ted noted. I was born a week after my dad was first elected, so I was born into this. I always said, as a kid, that I would run some day, although I have to say, as a little sidebar, when my mother ran in 1987 and got totally beaten up but was happy to do it, and was a fantastic candidate, I thought, "I'd never do this." But it comes back to you, as many know in this place. It comes back in waves, and in 2003, I just decided that, as Wayne said, what Dalton was talking about was exactly what I felt. I wanted to be here and be part of the team and work for who was a great boss and continued to be a great boss. I appreciate the opportunities that you've given me.

I was parliamentary assistant for four years to George Smitherman. I think I get a badge of honour for that. I certainly did it with pride. I loved my file of long-term care. If I've made a little difference in the lives of our seniors in long-term-care homes I'm particularly proud of that. I want to thank Louise Edmonds who worked with

me throughout that and who helped through a challenging file. I think we did—we did—make a difference. It was great work.

It's a crazy life we lead here as members of provincial Parliament. We do all kinds of things. We run the spectrum. It's an interesting life. We couldn't do it without a good family behind us supporting us. As all of the other members have mentioned this evening, having family behind you is incredibly important. My mom, God help her, has lived around the corner from me these eight years, has fed me on weekends when I had no food in the fridge, has listened to me complaining about the Nugget incessantly, and has just been a fantastic support and sounding board. She is the best mom anybody could ever have—let's just be frank—and understands the game and understands the pressures. I think that helped me so very much. Thanks, Mom; I know you're watching. And to my brothers, Joe and Paul, and their wives, Joanne and Christine, and, of course, my fantastic nieces and nephew: I am looking so forward to having a bit more time to spend with them and couldn't do this without their love and support.

As well, I couldn't have done the job that I have done without the support of so many great staff. Other members have taken the time to name them and I'm going to name them too. In Toronto, Mary-Anne Gilchrist started with me at the very beginning, and Michelle Rossi, Melissa Zanette, Phia Sanchez, David Palmer, and Karen Berkeley has been with me for a long time. Tom Allison, who is here tonight: Thank you, Tom. Adrienne Guthrie and Krystina Ceccarelli and David Spencer—and I know I'm missing a few, but these are fantastic young people who have great lives and who have done some great service for the province of Ontario. I thank them.

In my constituency office, Brooke Cranston and Micheline Fleming and Lise Anne Faubert Boissoneault and Kathleen Klein—the fabulous summer student for five, six, seven years—Jason Corbett, Amber Livingstone and Pauline Carriere, who have just been fantastic serving the people of Nipissing, doing an incredibly tough job in a constituency office, as we all appreciate, and really providing me with such great support and love over the years.

I have had some great friends here at Queen's Park, many, many in this room. Many have provided me support. I have had some great friends throughout staff here at Queen's Park. Lisa LaVecchia, Rod MacDonald—I'm not even going to look—Carol Price, Aaron Lazarus, Craig MacLennan, Debbie Kemble, Silvia Thomas, Tracy Sobers and so many more. I wish I could have just gone on and on with the list, but there were so many.

I had the privilege to serve as Minister of Revenue; Minister of Tourism, as Ted so kindly talked about; Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs; and as House leader. I want to thank France for acknowledging my pain. It has been a challenge. Dalton, I really don't know what I ever did to deserve it. But it also came with the added bonus of a seat next to Bradley for the last couple of years,

which has just been delightful. Love you, Bradley. You know it.

I have been blessed with the best deputy House leader ever in Gerry Phillips, and I thank him for that.

I've had the privilege in these roles to work with some incredible public servants in all of those ministries, some really incredible deputy ministers. We have some incredible public servants in Colin Andersen and Drew Fagan and Paul Genest and so many others who worked within those ministries who really give it their all on behalf of the people of Ontario, and we have to say thank you to them.

It does all, though, come back to the riding and what you do for your folks at home. I've had good friends—good friends in Toronto and good friends at home—who have supported me. I've had a riding association that's incredible. It meets monthly, is diligent, is supportive, and also tries to convince me not to read the Nugget on a regular basis.

I want to thank Keith and Nancy and Jason and Carol Ann, Karen-Ann, Bunty and Anne and Bill and George and Randy and Peter and Barb and Kathy and Elaine and Paul and Holly and the others that I know I've forgotten; I'm going to be writing apology notes everywhere. They have all made my life so much easier and so much better, and they, in their own way, are serving the people of Nipissing and ensuring that we continue to grow and develop and continue to provide the services that are so essential to the people of my riding and to the people of the province.

I am incredibly proud of what I've been able to accomplish in the riding, and Deb went through the long list; I'm not going to do it again. But I didn't do it alone. I worked with so many fantastic people at home who have been pushing forward their projects for so many years. As all of you know, we all have them and we all work with them every day. We can't accomplish these things without the help and dedication of incredible people who are working in various agencies and boards and municipalities across our region and, in particular, in Nipissing: to my 11 municipalities, to the mayors I've had a chance to work with, to Al, who has made my life so much better over the last four months—Al McDonald, the new mayor of North Bay, who is just a delight to work with and who sat in this House for some time.

It has just been a privilege to serve. I feel that, as the Premier talked about, it's always important to leave the province in better shape than we found it. I think that in my way, I have left my riding in better shape than I found it. I've worked very hard to do that and so I feel like it's my time to go.

I want to say thank you to all of you for making this such a wonderful experience for the last eight years. I want to say thank you to the people of Nipissing for having the confidence in me to allow me to serve for the last eight years and to work hard and make things happen and to work with me to make things happen. It has been a privilege.

I know that my dad is particularly proud that I got to sit on this side of the House. He spent a lot of those 42

years in the wilderness, so I know that he's looking down and smiling, as are a lot of his friends who have been incredibly supportive to me over the last few years.

I know that a lot of you are wondering what I'm going to do, because I'm kind of youngish to be leaving this place. I was thinking about that as I was thinking about what I'd say tonight. I wanted to end with a poem that I studied in high school and that has reflected what I've chosen to do with my life. I'll give you the last few lines:

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

Thanks.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Monique, thank you. Thank you for your service to the people of Nipissing and the people of Ontario. All of us here wish you all the best in your future endeavours.

MEMBER FOR BURLINGTON

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd now like to call upon the member from Nepean—Carleton to lead us in the tribute to the member from Burlington, Joyce Savoline.

2220

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I'm really honoured to be able to speak about my mentor tonight, Joyce Savoline. I'm going to cry, so please, nobody tell anyone I have a heart, and I won't tell anyone Monique does. I think it's probably a first that she and I have both have shed a tear here today.

I guess that's my moment of levity, because it is an emotional night for many of us. A lot of our colleagues here have decided that their path doesn't include this place anymore. We spend day in and day out, we love one another, we sometimes don't love one another, but at the end of the day we're sort of a club, that 107 of us who come in here every day to fight for our constituents.

My colleague from Burlington has been doing that for 30 years. She first started out in 1982 when she was elected locally and regionally in Burlington. We talked often about that first campaign, that grassroots campaign that took her, with her community activist friends, to council. Joyce impressed me, obviously, because she has a lot of tenacity, and she became the regional chair of Halton.

True to Joyce's nature, as I would later learn, although I didn't know her at the time—I think at the time I would have still been in elementary school learning civics—Joyce did something that not many people do. She had such a belief in democracy and accountability to the public that she actually put her job on the line and she became the first elected chair of the Halton region. For that I credit her, for putting her constituents, and her values and their values, first. I appreciate that. It also reminds me of my colleague from Carleton—Mississippi

Mills, who quite frankly did the same. I appreciate that Joyce did that.

She made another difficult decision in 2007, to come back to elected life. I know that she had enjoyed her time. And when she did—and many of the women in this chamber will remember at the time—for the first time in Ontario history we smashed that glass ceiling as females and we actually had 25% women elected in this chamber. I think that's gone down since that point in time, but that was a very important time. I must say, I'm glad she did, and I know that all of my caucus colleagues are happy that she arrived here.

She is, as I mentioned, a steady counsel to me. We talk about everything from time to time, whether it's about what I should do as a young legislator, what I should do when my daughter is not feeling well or what I should do about a staffing issue. I started calling her my Queen's Park mom. As many of you know, my father has passed on and my mother is in Nova Scotia. So we were like family; luckily, you don't get to get rid of me.

I'm going to miss her, and I know that that's going to be my problem because other people need her right now. Of her 44 years being married to her husband, Ron—and I did unlock my BlackBerry to find out how many days that was; I didn't take any pictures when I did it. It's 16,000 days that she's been married to her husband, Ron. Of that she has spent a great deal of her life in public. Her son, Rob, and her daughter, Natasha, have given their mother to public life all this time. So I think it is only fitting that when she actually had grandchildren, the light of her life, Olivia, and now her new grandson, Jack, they'll get to spend an awful lot of time with Joyce. And we're very happy about that.

Joyce is going to leave Queen's Park with a well-earned reputation, Speaker, as will you. She will be known for her long view and her sage advice, particularly to me. She'll be known for her selflessness and her dedication to her constituents.

She will be known also for her sense of humour. I'm glad the Premier is here tonight because I know when I give a hard question I've done right not by how excited your crowd gets but by how loud she laughs in my ear. And I enjoy it.

She's got grace, dignity. She's kind, she's thoughtful. Every one of those qualities personifies Joyce, and on behalf of Sylvia Jones and the Ontario PC caucus, I'd like to petition the Legislature tonight that we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows: Our choice is Joyce. Can we try to get her back from retirement?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Well, with a slogan like that, where are you going? Seems to me that some decisions have been made for you.

I want to say, what a classy person. I mean that in all sincerity. Joyce, you've been here for a while now, and my recollection of any work that I've had to do with you or observed you do in the House is that you're a really classy person. You bring a certain dignity to this House that some of us, from time to time, should maybe take as

an example. You bring a whole sense of calm to what you do, and I think that says a lot about you.

We had a chat in the opposition members' lobby a couple of weeks ago, I guess, and I asked you, "Why are you going?" She sort of looked at me and said, "Well, you know what? I've got grandkids. I really want to go and do those things that I should be doing as a mom and as a grandma. I want to go back and do that and enjoy those moments with my family." I think it says a lot about you in the sense that you're grounded. You understand what's important in life.

Yes, this place is important to all of us, and at a point it does take precedence over some of the things we do. But there comes a point when you've got to start making some decisions in life. As I said to you at the time, there are not a lot of people who get to do that choosing for themselves. I really envy your ability to make that decision, because it's a very tough thing to make the decision to leave this place. If you watched the members as they gave their talks—Mr. Martiniuk and other members—I'm not going to go through all the names, Bill and others. That's the reason I should never be Speaker; I forget names. It's really tough, it's hard, to make the decision to leave this place, because it is quite a unique job. It's one where you really get to make a difference every day when you go to work.

People sometimes take this as a bit of hokey, but it's true. You get up in the morning and make decisions about what you're going to work on in regard to what's important to your community, what's important to your party and what's important to this province, and you really do get to make a difference.

What I've observed about the work you've done is that you just sort of chugged through it with dignity, making sure that you know where you want to go, that you get to where you've got to go, and that at the end of the day it's not about leaving the enemy on the floor; it's about all of us getting to where we've to go. I think that says a lot.

On behalf of our caucus, I just want to say congratulations on the decision you were able to make; it says a lot about you. We're certainly going to miss you, but I know your grandchildren are going to love it. Have a great one.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Oakville.

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: This certainly has been, I think, one of the better nights I have experienced in the eight years I've been here. Listening to everybody this evening makes me think that it seems we spend four years beating each other up in this place and one evening lifting each other up. It really is a privilege tonight for me to be able to lift up somebody I have been connected with politically for 26 years—I counted, the other day—and that's Joyce Savoline.

Joyce and I came into politics around the same time. Joyce came in a little earlier than me, in 1982, I think, and I joined her in 1985. I was still in my 20s then. That's how long Joyce and I go back. So we've grown up

together politically, really. We've seen a lot of changes in our region together.

I served with Joyce as a regional councillor. Joyce beat me in a race for regional chair one year, if you remember. Joyce became regional chair that year, and it was a privilege to serve under Joyce. We served together on the board of the children's aid society in the region of Halton. Times were really tough in child welfare back then, and we worked together. There was a collegial atmosphere that existed on that council under Joyce's direction, and when she was a member of that council, that you just doesn't see in this place, and it's unfortunate—I'm not being critical there. We didn't always agree on all issues back then, but we were all working in the same direction, and that was largely as a result of the leadership of Joyce Savoline.

When I heard Joyce was going to run politically for the province, I was kind of hoping she'd run for this side. She ran for that side, and she has done a wonderful job since she has been here, always working, as I said, on behalf of, and in the best interests of, the people she has represented at any level of government.

The political theatre and partisan nature of this place are not always a positive thing. To be frank, for a few years it kind of changed the relationship Joyce and I had. It became a partisan relationship. But I've had the good fortune, through all that, to be able to fall back on the memory of somebody I have been privileged to serve with co-operatively as a friend—Ron and Joyce and Jan and I—for a long period of time, over 20 years.

When you think of classy, when you think of determined, when you think of somebody who just loves their family, loves their grandkids, when you think of somebody who loves their community, you think of Joyce Savoline.

So, Joyce, best wishes to you, to Ron, to Natasha, to Joshua, to Rob and to Becky and especially to Olivia and Jack. Enjoy your new life. Thank you for what you've done. If there's anyone in this place who has earned a happy hereafter after this place, Joyce, it's you.

Good wishes.

Applause.

2230

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Burlington.

Mrs. Joyce Savoline: Well, first of all, looking at the vintage of the folks in this room, like Monique said, I'm glad you're still here but that you're also still awake. It's way past my bedtime, so I'm sure it's also way past yours. Thank you all for sticking in and, Premier, thank you for being here tonight.

It was a very difficult decision, I'm sure, for all of us who made our decision not to run in 2011. In fact, at this point in time, it still feels like an out-of-body experience. It's not quite real, and yet I'm here saying goodbye and listening to others say goodbye. My name won't be on the ballot this fall, and it will be one of the strangest times for me, because in almost 30 years that will be the first time in an election at whatever level that I haven't seen the name "Savoline" on a ballot. So it will seem

strange, and believe me, it will be something that I will miss terribly.

It's been such a privilege and an honour and with such humility that I have served in this House with the most outstanding people. We all come together, whether by chance or in a deliberate way, to create a path that creates the quality of life and makes good things happen for folks in Ontario. Sometimes we miss that little opportunity, but eventually, I think, after going at it a few times, we do get to where we're going.

I cannot tell you the feeling I have walking into this building every day and thinking of the giants, the shoulders of the giants that I and we all stand on every day from the time this place was created till now and the kind of province that we've built together. It's because of the differences in our ideas, I think, that's created that healthy tension that makes Ontario the greatest place anywhere to live, and I hope that that will continue.

The people who give the biggest sacrifice, I think, are our families. Bar none, my family has done just that. They have given me inspiration. They have given me support. They have given me the time, to do this job that I love so much, this crazy job that all of us love so much. To them, I think that we can never begin to pay back what they have given to us.

It's for my children, Rob and Natasha, that I think that I really began my political career 30 years ago when I wanted to make things better in our community of Burlington. Now I leave it in your hands to make things better for my grandchildren, Olivia and Jack. It will be up to you to continue to make things better.

Most of us come here from different backgrounds, varied backgrounds. A lot of us come here from immigrant roots, and I think those roots have given us a sense of how not to take things for granted, how to see an opportunity when it comes before us, how to seize that opportunity, how to create relationships and work together to make things happen. I think that we have that possibility here more than ever.

We have our differences as political parties, and we work hard during campaigns and elections to put our ideas forward. But it's my hope that, more and more, as we continue throughout the years, once election day is over, we can park our politics at the door and make good things happen for the good people of our province, because without us those things don't happen. Without that healthy tension, without that healthy debate, without that healthy moving forward, that can't happen. The people of Ontario put their trust in us to be able to do that, to park our politics at the door and be able to move forward in a big way.

I've always said to my constituents and my family that we're only as strong as the weakest member in our community. I think that's something we always have to remember as we go forward, that we're always working for that little guy, and how to move this province forward to do that.

My greatest role model was my mom. My mom was a great woman. She was a vital person. She went through

many hardships, having to flee China at a time of war, living in a refugee camp with two little girls and having to find a country to live in. Weren't we just the luckiest family in the world to have Canada embrace us, for us to come here, arriving at Pier 21 in Halifax on about March 29, 1953, and understanding from that moment on, through the kind of role model that my mother was, that your cup is always half full, and if you approach the day with a sense of humour, and that happiness was an attitude, every day would be a good day. That's how we grew up, my sister and I, and that's how we continue to move forward. I only hope that I can give part of that to my children.

It's hard to imagine not having the abundance that we have and are able to give our children today, and for them to understand that there are people less fortunate. It behooves us all to make sure our kids grow up understanding what it's like to not have as much as they do.

It's our job to listen to people, because it's through people that we learn how to do our job. We're isolated in our offices. The people we represent and who elect us are our eyes and ears, and it's for them and with them that we do the best job.

I want to thank all of you, and I want to thank my staff. My staff have been my rock both here at Queen's Park and at the constituency office: Colleen Chutko, Bianca Lankheit, for a while, Paul Marai, and my intern here, Leslie De Meulles, and also at my constituency office, Carol Mannone and Cecilia Taylor-Claire. These folks have worked hard, done all of the grunge work to make me look good. I thank them from the bottom of my heart for everything that they have done. If I have made any contributions in this place, I have made them sharing them with my colleagues, on the advice of my colleagues, and with all of you.

I want to say thank you to my family one more time, who are always happy to see me at home and sometimes happy to see me when I leave, too. So, guys, I'm coming home.

I want to say that I am most proud that I have never been ejected from this House, and I want the record to show that, and only once did Mr. Butt confiscate my telephone.

Whether it's deliberate or by coincidence, I notice that there are 14 lights that are out, or just almost out, coincident with the 14 members who are leaving. So whoever made that happen—getting goosebumps?—it's interesting that it's happened in our House tonight.

Deb, thank you very much for the kind of sage advice and patience that you show on a daily basis to all of us in this House. Without you, this place doesn't tick.

So, Mr. Speaker, with that, thank you very much.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Joyce Savoline, the member from Burlington, thank you for your service to your constituents and your service to the people of Ontario. We wish you all the best.

2240

MEMBER FOR BARRIE

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Member from Peterborough.

Mr. Jeff Leal: I just want to note for the record this evening that another member who is retiring, the Honourable Aileen Carroll from the riding of Barrie, could not be with us this evening. She had a long-standing engagement, so she couldn't attend.

Just briefly, we know that Aileen has had a very distinguished career in public life, both here in Ontario and in Canada, having served in the cabinet of both Prime Ministers Chrétien and Martin, and then serving in the administration of Premier McGuinty as the Minister of Culture. She has a long-standing service to her community of Barrie in a wide variety of areas, and I know, on behalf of all of us here, we wish her, her husband, Kevin, and her family all the very best in retirement.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I want to thank you, and our thanks on behalf of the Legislature go out to Aileen Carroll for the service that she has given to the citizens of Barrie, both at the provincial level and the federal level, and we wish her the best.

MEMBER FOR ELGIN–MIDDLESEX–LONDON

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Minister of Education.

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: I am truly honoured that I have been asked, on behalf of the Liberal Party in this assembly, to offer a tribute to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Honourable Steve Peters, MPP for Elgin–Middlesex–London.

Now, Steve and I are part of the Liberal class of '99—and Dave Levac. We're the three remaining members of the class of '99 who arrived in the Legislative Assembly as members of the opposition party, and, of course, those of us who have had the privilege of serving in opposition know how hard we work and the important work that we do as critics.

Steve Peters was critic for persons with disabilities, and I would say that the work that he did in that particular role, with those responsibilities, was significant, and much of the work that Steve Peters did as critic really formed the basis of what has now become the Ontarians with Disabilities Act. So very early on in his career, he gained an ability to be a strong advocate, a hard worker. He really dug into every issue that he was involved with. After being critic for persons with disabilities, he became critic for agriculture. And on any and every file that Steve was attached to, he brought a real passion, a real ardour for the issue.

I'm sure that the Speakers of the day would be able to tell about your ardour in this House, and it has been observed what a great job you do keeping order and keeping tabs on hecklers. Sometimes it's almost like you

know, before someone says anything, that they're going to do it, and I would offer that it's probably because of your very great—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Renfrew.

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:—your own experience in that regard.

Steve Peters came to this assembly a very young man, but very experienced in politics. I have here that in 1988, some 23 years ago, I believe, you were elected as a councillor for St. Thomas, and you went on to serve as the mayor of St. Thomas. You were elected in 1999 as the MPP for Elgin–Middlesex–London, and then in 2003 re-elected—you have been elected for three terms—elected to government, and you were appointed by the Premier as the Minister of Agriculture and Food.

Again, Steve brought to that role the passion that he has for all those things that he knows in his heart to be important and worthwhile, not just to his constituents but to the people of Ontario. Because I've had the privilege of serving as Minister of Agriculture and Food, I'm very aware, again, of the foundation that Steve Peters laid in that file. I think, Speaker, if I may, we do share a great deal in common in that we represent rural ridings, but our passion for the agriculture industry and for promoting the wonderful food that we have here in Ontario. Steve went on to serve as Minister of Labour and then, following that important role, he has now served in a role where I think he particularly distinguished himself, and that is the role of Speaker.

Even in the role of Speaker, you never forgot how important it was to promote the quality food, the fruits of the hard-working farmers of Ontario in this very place. He almost immediately set out to ensure that all of the food offerings in this place to all of the visitors would be Ontario products. He very proudly speaks of that and promotes that.

When Steve Peters arrived in this place as the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, he immediately, because he is such a collector himself, made the art collection in this place more available to the people of Ontario. Steve has always had the greatest regard for this place as the people's place. Any time you come in here—and I have had the opportunity to come in on weekends, as I know many of us here have; late hours, on weekends—and Steve Peters, our Speaker, was demonstrating his common touch. He would be talking to visitors—they may have been from his riding; they may not have—but he was always eager to talk about this very special place and the significance of the art works, the architecture and the many features of this building that some of us who come here every day might overlook. But for Speaker Peters, for my friend Steve, they have been very special and very important.

Steve has also done something as Speaker that I hope will be emulated and repeated by Speakers who follow you, and that is your efforts to visit schools as the Speaker. When he comes into a school he brings his costume as

Speaker, and he talks to students about the role of the Speaker and about the importance of government. I think that's something that is very important. As all of us in this place are looking for ways to make our political process more relevant to our young people, the Speaker has, in my view, in a very effective way, done just that.

If I were to describe you, Speaker, in my part of the world we would say that you're a salt-of-the-earth person; you're a man of your word; you're as honest as the day is long. Those are wonderful attributes not just for a Speaker; for anyone. I would say that they have contributed to your success politically.

Also in your role as Speaker, you've worked so very hard to remind us about the importance of what we do here as advocates for the people who send us. He's always pointing to the carving—I think it's above that pillar—"Audi alteram partem" or "Hear the other side." He's always reminding us that that's what we are called to this place to do: to hear the other side. I have to say, I do my best, although it's hard some days.

Speaker, you're definitely going to be missed here. We know, though, that in your community you have many interests, of course. Some of us know that, Steve, you like to garden. You're a great gardener. He's a great collector as well. Some of the things that he likes to collect are memorabilia about his community. I know that everyone in this place is very aware of the history of Jumbo the elephant and its connection to his hometown of St. Thomas. I'm sure that now you'll have much more time to pursue those things that you love.

I can say on behalf of everyone—certainly, on behalf of my colleagues in the Liberal caucus, but I'm absolutely certain on behalf of everyone in this special place—you will be missed. You definitely brought a fairness to your role as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, and we so very much respect that.

2250

You've been a part of my life and even my family for these last 11-plus years. I feel very blessed that I can call you my friend. I do wish you well as you pursue whatever may be your interest in the future. Thank you so much, Steve.

Mr. Ted Arnott: Mr. Speaker, it's a real honour and a pleasure for me on behalf of our PC caucus to have this chance to pay tribute to you for your 12 years of service in the Ontario Legislature as MPP for Elgin–Middlesex–London, the outstanding service that you provided your constituents and, in the last four years, the service that you provided this House.

It's a rare thing for a young 25-year-old to be elected to your local council, then go on to become mayor and, later, MPP, serving for another 23 years in public service, to see and do all that you have seen. As a member of this House, you've seen the opposition and government caucus rooms. You've sat around the cabinet table as Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and as Minister of Labour. In the latter role, you led something that all members of this House supported in a rare show of unanimity when you put forward Bill 221 on May 4,

2007, a bill that allows the cabinet to draft regulations prescribing presumptions for occupational diseases for firefighters. It passed with unanimous support from all parties in just under five minutes. This is, I believe, one of the only two times when this has happened in the Legislature's history, and it is certainly a feather in your cap.

Steve, you've done a great job as Speaker. In fact, in my 21 years of elected public service, you have been one of the very best Speakers that I have seen. You've been impartial and fair, and you've done the job with enthusiasm and a sense of humour, often at times when we need it. Your efforts have made this building a much greater showcase for the people of Ontario.

It was your initiative to have food services include more Ontario-grown products in the cafeteria. In the dining room, people can now drink Railway City Brewing's Dead Elephant Ale from St. Thomas, Ontario, and many other types of local beer from Ontario's breweries. You have made great strides to put Ontario fruit wines on display, and our mutual friend Bert Andrews would want me to thank you for that, too.

As Speaker, you've travelled around Ontario to speak to groups and ridings represented by members of all three parties—you visited my riding, and I appreciate that—about the role of Speaker and the significance of this Legislature and its history. I think you've set the bar high for future Speakers by doing a noble job to encourage camaraderie amongst all members and even our staff.

You've opened the door to the Speaker's apartment to our staff on countless occasions, and for that I know you've earned a great deal of respect; certainly in our caucus you have. The one thing we're wondering: It's about five to 11; is the Speaker's apartment open right now? Will it be open later on? Okay. We'll look forward to the answer to that.

Speaker, hats off to you for a job well done. While you may be changing course, I know that you have a great deal of energy that will be directed to positive public service in the future, and we wish you well in your future endeavours.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Mr. Speaker, I'm not used to calling you by your riding name, Elgin–Middlesex–London. We don't hear this riding very often around here, but it is yours and certainly you have served it well.

A lot of what I was going to say has already been mentioned, so I will go quickly: elected councillor of St. Thomas in 1988; Canada's youngest mayor when you got elected mayor of St. Thomas in 1991—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): He's the youngest ever.

M^{me} France Gélinas: —but you were, at the time—and in 1999 came into this Legislative Assembly; served as critic for disabilities, then agriculture, and became the Minister of Agriculture and Food. I had the pleasure to travel with you on a number of occasions with the Ontario–Québec Parliamentary Association and got to know you a little bit better.

I also know a great deal more about Jumbo, the giant circus elephant that was struck and killed by a train in St. Thomas. I didn't even know about Jumbo the giant elephant but now I know the ins and outs of that incident and everything that this elephant has ever done, good or bad.

You are the only Speaker I have ever worked with, so I can tell you that I had all the faith in the work that you did. I thought you were fair, you were equitable, but at the same time you were also patient with new members like me, who did not always know exactly how things worked in here. You have been recognized, and I have to add my voice to this, for your dedication to bringing Ontario-grown food and drinks to this assembly, to the dining room, to the cafeteria, as well as the horticultural flowers and everything around Queen's Park. You certainly left your touch on this.

There is one particular issue, though, given that you are a man of great power sitting in the Speaker's chair. By the east door, just beside your office, there are those bigger, larger-than-life-sized pictures of men looking at me every time I come in through the east door. Frankly, Speaker, they scare me. So if there is anything you can do for me, I would ask that you change this. Do anything. Get them to look left or right or do something. In exchange for this, I will stop spying on how many times you go for fresh air out of the east door. I think this is a pretty good deal. I'll leave it at that for you to think it over.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd like to thank the Minister of Education, the member from Wellington-Halton Hills and the member from Nickel Belt. We'll see what we can do. Maybe we'll move Laura Secord down. But Laura Secord is actually a he. If you go take a look at that painting, she was once a he. So I don't know; we can work on that. To my mother who is watching at home on the Internet: You didn't just hear what France Gélinas had to say.

You know, this has been an amazing evening. We have been here now for four hours and 15 minutes. As the minister pointed out, the motto of this place is to hear the other side. This has been an amazing night. We have actually been able to hear the other side. It's a challenge I would lay down to a future Speaker. Maybe one of the ways we can solve that as well, France, is by electing a female Speaker in this place so that it's not a bunch of old men who are looking—maybe not old men; I better rephrase that. Sorry about that, Mike. It's not a shot at us. But I hope we can learn from tonight, because one of the things that has really struck me is that we've all learned more about one another. It's something that we don't do enough around this place. I've had the opportunity to talk to former Speakers and you hear the stories of camaraderie that used to exist around here. You can sit down and talk to Bradley or Sterling and they'll tell you all about it. It's something, for those of you who are going to be here after October 6, that we need do more of. We do need to get to know each other a little better, because I think it

can change the decorum in this place. I would encourage you to do it.

It's amazing, this building that has served since 1893 and what has gone on in it. You need to always remember that: Hear the other side.

I want to thank my mom, Joan, who is watching tonight at home, courtesy of a wonderful initiative by our broadcast and recording services, where you can now watch legislative proceedings on the Internet. My brother Joe, who is here again for the second time today—

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'll say this to my brother Joe: Generally what we've heard tonight we talk about when somebody is six feet under. I think that that's one of the amazing things tonight. So sorry, Joe, you missed out on a bunch of business at the funeral home. But it's true—and sorry, Mike Brown is a funeral director as well.

My sister Janet, who is not here; and my dad, Percy, who is—you know, similar to some of the stories you hear, my dad saw my first election in 1988 but never witnessed one after that. But we certainly a few bottles of champagne and a few glasses of beer poured on his grave on election nights over the years, and I'm sorry he's not here.

My good friend Suzanne van Bommel is here. Suzanne ran all three of my election campaigns. Thank you.

To friends like Don Cosens and Mark Cosens, who have been there over the years to support me and all of my campaign team, thanks.

To the citizens of Elgin-Middlesex-London and the citizens of St. Thomas who have marked their X beside me, or even those who didn't mark the X beside me but supported me over the years, thank you.

2300

It's been an amazing opportunity. I want to thank somebody who's sitting behind us, a guy by the name of Rod McDonald. I remember Labour Day 1998. Rod McDonald was looking for candidates and came to see me at my mayor's office in St. Thomas. Rod hounded me and I said, "I'll give you an answer by Thanksgiving," then it was Remembrance Day and then it was finally Christmas. I want to thank Rod McDonald because I wouldn't be here if Rod hadn't pushed me.

June 3, 1999, 12 years ago, I arrived in this place. I'll never forget that drive just after June 3, 1999, driving up University Avenue and thinking, "Oh, my goodness, this is where I'm going to work for the next four years," never realizing that I'd ever actually have an opportunity to live in this place. But arriving here immediately, and Tony, the parking lot attendant out front, coming up and me saying, "Hi, I'm Steve Peters." "I know who you are, Mr. Peters. Just park right over there."

This is an amazing building and we've got amazing people who work here.

I want to thank the Premier on a number of fronts. Dalton McGuinty gave me some great opportunities to do things that most people will never ever have a chance to

do, and I thank him for that. I thank him for the opportunity to have served as Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Labour for this province. I also want to thank him for October 28, 2007, at 4:10 in the afternoon to be exact. That was the day I was dropped from cabinet. You know, it's one of those things where you're bitter at the time. But, in hindsight, thank you, Dalton, because you gave me an opportunity to do something that was never ever in the cards. It wasn't in my cards of driving up the street in June 1999. I thank you for it because I, like Mike Brown, am one of only 40 people who have ever had a chance to have served in this place, at least up to now. Mike and I will hang forever in this building, as the Premier will, except more people are going to see Mike and me down the road than they will you because more people travel down the main corridors of the building than they do the second floor. Sorry about that, Premier.

I had an opportunity to work on some amazing initiatives, whether it was establishment of an ethanol growth fund, bringing health and safety to agriculture in this province, or presumptive legislation, which was mentioned. I need to use this as an opportunity right now to apologize to Andrea Horwath and to publicly say thank you for the work that she did advocating for presumptive legislation. I didn't have that opportunity to say thank you to her that day the legislation was introduced, but I apologize that I didn't that day, and I can say that now.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Lots of great initiatives. I can go back and look back in my riding. There's one, though, that's finally been done. It started with Conservatives, went through the Liberals, went through the NDP, back to the Conservatives, back to the Liberals, finally dealing with a consolidated courthouse for the county of Elgin. At the end of June this year, we're going to break ground on this courthouse. I could care less—it's wonderful all the things that are done, but that is the one thing that I will always say thank you for. Thanks to the Attorney General and George Smitherman for helping to make that happen.

Interjection: What does Yvonne Harris think of it?

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Yvonne Harris is very happy about that.

I want to thank my constituency staff—Craig Bradford, Kim Davis, Joe Lyons, Frank Skonieczny and Veronika Sonier—and my Queen's Park staff—Maggie Head, who's up in the gallery tonight with my brother Joe and Suzanne van Bommel, and Ana Pontoni and Gloria Richards. Thank you all very much for the opportunity.

I want to take this opportunity to say thank you to the Clerk, Deb Deller; Todd Decker; the table staff; all the legislative staff, whether it's security, the cleaners, the guides, the Hansard staff, broadcast and recording, library, grounds, food services and, of course, our good friend Frank the barber. Thank you all. Thank you to the media for the work that they have done.

I'm going to close with a couple things. I say this to the members and it hearkens to a comment that Norm Sterling made earlier. I think it is time to look at a Camp commission report again for this place, because if you look back at what that Camp commission did, that Camp commission brought true independence to this Legislature. It established offices for members in this building, it established constituency offices, and it clearly defined the role between the executive and the elected. We've lost that, and we can blame all parties for what we have lost. But you know, collectively, as members, if we want to change things, and if you want to change things after 6 October, it is you, is the 107 people in this room, who need to take this place back, who need to say to the corner office—it doesn't matter who is sitting in that corner office, whether it is the Premier's office or the Leader of the Opposition's office or the leader of the third party—"We've had enough. We're going to take this place back."

To continue to oppose for the sake of opposing or supporting for the sake of supporting—we have talked for years about bringing more freedom back to the backbenchers, but it's all been talk. The members need to bring that back. I certainly hope that you will do your part to make that happen.

I want to close with this, and it is the only political comment that I will make from this dais: We have two days left and there is a blight that is going to come over this building. It is an apartment complex that is proposed for Avenue Road and Bloor. If we collectively want to leave a legacy in this place and not destroy the beautiful vista that exists of this building as we travel up University Avenue, let's stop 21 Avenue Road. I don't care about what the developers may think, but we have an opportunity to preserve this vista for future generations. If we don't do it now, that opportunity is lost and that is going to hang over all of us collectively within this House.

So thank you. Thank you to the Premier. Thank you to the members of the opposition. As Speaker, I've had the opportunity to sit on both sides of this House: to sit in opposition, to sit in government, and then to have the privilege to sit in this chair and to see things from both sides. There are great things that have happened within this chamber. I wish each and every one of you all the best.

I will end with this: Remember always, we've got the greatest agricultural province in the country. Buy local, buy Ontario, buy Canadian.

Thank you all very much.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): There being no further business, this House stands adjourned until 9 a.m. tomorrow morning.

Oh, and by the way, for a little bit, if you want, you can come upstairs.

The House adjourned at 2308.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Steve Peters

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman, Tonia Grannum

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Aggelonitis, Hon. / L'hon. Sophia (LIB)	Hamilton Mountain	Minister of Revenue / Ministre du Revenu Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Arthurs, Wayne (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (LIB)	London West / London-Ouest	Attorney General / Procureur général Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Health Promotion and Sport / Ministre de la Promotion de la santé et du Sport
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Brown, Michael A. (LIB)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Brownell, Jim (LIB)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Caplan, David (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Carroll, Hon. / L'hon. Aileen (LIB)	Barrie	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism and Culture / Ministre du Tourisme et de la Culture
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
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Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
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Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiles et de l'Immigration
Hoy, Pat (LIB)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Johnson, Rick (LIB)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kormos, Peter (NDP)	Welland	Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
Kular, Kuldip (LIB)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Jean-Marc (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Leal, Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	
Levac, Dave (LIB)	Brant	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Cambridge	
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Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
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Mitchell, Hon. / L'hon. Carol (LIB)	Huron–Bruce	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Moridi, Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	

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Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pendergast, Leeanna (LIB)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (LIB)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
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Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
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Ramsay, David (LIB)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Ruprecht, Tony (LIB)	Davenport	
Sandals, Liz (LIB)	Guelph	
Savoline, Joyce (PC)	Burlington	
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
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Elizabeth Witmer
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Wednesday 1 June 2011

Mercredi 1^{er} juin 2011

Speaker
Honourable Steve Peters

Président
L'honorable Steve Peters

Clerk
Deborah Deller

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 1 June 2011

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 1^{er} juin 2011

The House met at 0900.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Good morning. Please remain standing for the Lord's Prayer, followed by the non-denominational prayer.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' EXPENDITURES

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I beg to inform the House that today I have laid upon the table the individual members' expenditures for the year 2010-11. The members can find these located in their desks.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUPPORTING SMOKE-FREE ONTARIO BY REDUCING CONTRABAND TOBACCO ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 APPUYANT LA STRATÉGIE ONTARIO SANS FUMÉE PAR LA RÉDUCTION DU TABAC DE CONTREBANDE

Ms. Smith, on behalf of Ms. Aggelonitis, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 186, An Act to amend the Tobacco Tax Act /
Projet de loi 186, Loi modifiant la Loi de la taxe sur le
tabac.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Further debate?

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I will be sharing my time this morning with the member from Mississauga—Streetsville.

Mr. Bob Delaney: In our debates on Bill 186, we have covered a number of topics. I'd like to focus, in what is really our closing debate, on some of the impacts of smoking. We're out here to try to prevent and stop people from smoking.

A very recently released report by the World Health Organization estimated that this year smoking will kill six million people, and that includes some 600,000 non-smokers. The World Health Organization also warns that governments worldwide are not doing enough to control smoking. In looking at the things that they've recommended, Ontario is doing many of the things that they've recommended. While the rest of the world is catching up, we cannot afford to be negligent and to be lax in trying to keep Ontarians from smoking.

Some 172 countries around the world, plus the European Union, have signed on to the World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. That study concludes by saying that some eight million people annually, by 2030, could die from tobacco-related causes if nothing is done.

While I'm in this, I'd also like to mention that we'll be sharing some of our time as well with the member from Glengarry—Prescott—Russell.

It comes down, I think, to those of us who have lost our friends due to a cigarette. In some of my earlier remarks, I talked about some of the people whom I knew who—and I'll mention some of them again. An old friend of mine from Regina called one day. I was sitting at my desk. I looked at the telephone, and it had the Saskatchewan 306 area code, and I thought, "I wonder who that is?" It was my friend Donna. I said, "This isn't your normal home number. Where are you calling from?" She said, "I'm calling you from the hospital." I said, "Oh, are you in the hospital? What's wrong?" She allowed that she was in the hospital and she had lung cancer. I said, "What is the outlook for you?" She said, "Not good."

We spoke a few more times, and then the line went silent. I found out in an email some weeks later that she had died of lung cancer.

Another person I worked with in the 1980s, a very bright and energetic young woman, had her last cigarette in the early 1990s, and 20 years later she was diagnosed with stage 4 lung cancer. She won't make it.

I think what we're trying to do here today is enact a series of measures that enable the province to cut off the supply of tobacco, to address contraband tobacco, to seize contraband tobacco. What it really comes down to, in the end, is that we won't be burying our friends, and our parents won't have to say to their children, "Don't do that. Don't do that." "But, Mom, Dad, I can get it cheap."

Death is death, whether it comes at a premium price in a package with a tobacco warning or whether it comes in a plain baggie that contains God only knows what inside. What it really comes down to, as I often tell students when I go and visit them in school—I'll just relate the story in my last few seconds—"Take a coin out of your pocket and flip it. All of you who flipped it, if it's heads, sit down. You didn't get cancer. But if it's tails, you did get cancer. Now flip the coin again. If it landed heads, you got cancer but you didn't die of it. If it landed tails, you're dead."

Those are pretty much the odds you face if you decide to keep smoking today, and what this bill does is enable Ontario to stop killing people with tobacco.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Further debate? The member for Nepean–Carleton.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On the second-last day of this session, you got it right and I appreciate that.

I also appreciate the opportunity to speak here today. I do have a bad allergy attack, so I would ask for water.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): It isn't because you stayed up too late last night?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Yes, at the tributes, which I do want to speak about.

I will say that the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party will be supporting this piece of legislation; however, we do have serious concerns. That is why illegal tobacco is addressed in our Changebook.

As you know, illegal tobacco has grown over the years—very seriously in the last eight years—and that's why we think it's very important. I agree with the member from Mississauga, who said that this is one way to combat smoking. However, that is not the only thing we're fighting. It's also the illegal drug trade and the underground economy, where criminals are actually making lots of money and making money off children as young as 11 and 12 years old across our province who are smoking illegal tobacco in schoolyards. That money is going, as Chief Blair told my colleague from Thornhill, directly into guns and gangs on our streets.

That's why we think this bill does not go far enough. In fact, Tim Hudak has said that when he forms the government, the Changebook will aggressively tackle the problem—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Member, we'll start early by saying that we don't use full names; positions, please.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: That's why the Ontario PC caucus believes we need to aggressively tackle this problem by increasing enforcement efforts, including at the US border. As we know, in eastern Ontario where I reside, about an hour from my community, there is increased drug traffic across the border.

We also believe that we need to reduce the authorized volume of unmarked tobacco products on reserves. We believe we have to work with reserve police agencies and band councils to close unauthorized cigarette manufacturing facilities and prevent delivery of manufacturing materials used by illicit factories.

0910

Let me speak momentarily about this. While we had committee hearings, we did have two chiefs join us at committee who told us that they were not adequately consulted by this government, and I think that's a real shame.

Finally, we believe in increasing police search-and-seizure authority related to tobacco products. This bill addresses a little bit of that, but we think it could go further.

I'm going to split my time with my colleague from York–Simcoe. But before I close, this is likely the last bill I will address in this Parliament, and I would like, in

the few short moments I have, to say thank you to you and Speaker Peters, as well as the others who have held that chair, including my colleagues from York–Simcoe and Simcoe–Grey. I'd also like to thank all those members who are retiring for their public service. Last night was probably the most extraordinary evening that we've had in this chamber since I've been here, in my five and a half years of politics. As my colleague from Oakville said, we spend four years here beating each other up; why not spend a night lifting one another up? And we were able to do that.

On our side, I want to just say thank you to my colleague from Carleton–Mississippi Mills, who has been a great mentor and friend to me. He wasn't the first person to start talking about anti-smoking, but he was the first person in all of Canada to bring forward anti-smoking legislation. He did that in the 1980s, when it was not popular, and I think that speaks to the type of politician and public servant that my colleague from Carleton–Mississippi Mills is. If you don't mind, I beg your indulgence to use his name: Norm Sterling. Thank you, Speaker.

I'd also like to say thank you to my colleague from Cambridge, Gerry Martiniuk. Gerry has been a good friend to me. I call him Ger Bear. He sits beside me in caucus. I'm going to miss him, because ever since I've been here, he has spoken up on the rights of children. Whether that is diabetic children or children who are using an online computer at school, he has always stood up for their rights. Gerry, as a mother, I want to say thank you for everything that you've done.

My other colleague Bill Murdoch is something of a maverick, but I've got to tell you something: He's a very loyal friend. As you know, I'm still the youngest member, and after the next election I probably won't be. When I arrived here, I was 31 years old, and my dad was dying of cancer. He had not smoked for many years, probably 30 years. Bill was very good to me and from time to time would call my father, who was living in New Glasgow, because they both shared and loved hockey; they shared that passion. My father spent a lot of time in the hockey arena, organizing many national events. So Bill would call him from time to time to get a hockey sweater donated to Bill and signed.

I need to tell you a funny story about Bill Murdoch, and I'll have to tell him this one day. In 2003, my husband ran for the Ontario PC Party under Ernie Eves. Bill decided he was going to speak his mind, as he often does, and it sort of derailed the campaign at the time. I remember calling up Bill, as the wife of a candidate, not the candidate myself, and saying, "What the hell are you doing?" I left a voice message, and who called me that evening after 5 o'clock? Well, it was Bill Murdoch, and I learned a thing or two about grassroots politics. He is probably the best grassroots politician this province has ever seen. I salute Bill Murdoch, and I just want to say thank you to him for all the advice he's given me over the years.

Of course, last night I did have an opportunity to talk about Joyce Savoline, the member from Burlington, who

has become a bit of a parental figure to me in this Legislature. It's obviously a very difficult time, to see people that you love go on and do other things, but what makes me happy is that Joyce will now have more time to spend with her grandkids, more time to spend with her husband, Ron, and of course, more time to spend with her kids, Natasha and Rob.

I know that these four individuals who are leaving the Progressive Conservative caucus, who are part of our family in the Ontario PC team, will stay in touch. They won't leave us alone, and they'll continue to provide us with sage advice. That's why I think it's important, in pieces of legislation like this, that we recognize the contributions of all members who, in these last days of this Parliament, have given so much and who have contributed so much of their time.

I do notice that there are a few other departing members in here today. I just want to acknowledge Jim Brownell, who is my next-door neighbour, who would understand a little bit about this illegal drug trade because it does impact his riding so much. Last night, I enjoyed listening to my colleague from Parry Sound-Muskoka talk about the time you met with his family for one of your very important private member's bills, and I salute you for that.

I note that Mr. Hoy is here, and I do appreciate all of the work he has done in this chamber. I only had a few occasions to work with him. However, I will say that he is one of the finest chairs of a committee that this Legislature has seen in my time here, and I thank you for that.

There are two other departing members. I'm going to go to Aileen Carroll first. I know she had quite a distinguished career in municipal and federal politics before joining us here as a cabinet minister. I appreciate that she has taken the time to give back to public service this one last time, and I wish her well in retirement.

Finally, my other next-door neighbour, Jean-Marc Lalonde: He's a fine individual. Last night, he gave a tremendous speech when his family and his staff were here. Jean-Marc is known in eastern Ontario as a fighter for our community, and I want to recognize that. He is a fine gentleman who had a distinguished career in public life before he came to Queen's Park, and I know he'll continue to have a distinguished life after he decides to do whatever he wants to do in the future. I just want to say thank you to him for giving Franco-Ontarians a strong voice.

I'd like to thank all of these members for contributing so much.

Again, I would like to now cede the floor to my colleague from York Simcoe, who is not retiring, who will be back here in October. I just want to wish everyone well. Happy summer, and we'll see you on the campaign trail.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Further debate?

Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde: In 2004, the McGuinty government embarked on a commitment that earned On-

tario international recognition as a leader in the battle against smoking. I am pleased to speak today on this government's commitment to build on that solid foundation with a renewed smoke-free Ontario strategy.

Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable death and disease in Ontario. As it was mentioned many times, it kills 13,000 people a year—three times the combined deaths caused by alcohol, drugs, suicides, homicides and car crashes.

Our government is taking a whole-of-government approach to supporting a renewed smoke-free Ontario. We are working with other ministries to take additional actions and make new investments, and we are addressing recommendations provided in the October 2010 report by the Tobacco Strategy Advisory Group.

First on our agenda is working closely with the Ministry of Revenue to reduce the availability of cheap, illegal tobacco in Ontario. This legislation, if passed, would provide new tools to reduce the availability of illegal tobacco and help to keep it out of the hands of kids.

Specifically, it would do three things.

First, it would change the way tobacco growers are regulated and license importers to discourage all types of raw leaf tobacco from entering illegal markets.

Second, it would allow police officers to seize from individuals illegal cigarettes and other tobacco products found in plain view.

Third, it would set new fine levels for individuals caught possessing small amounts of illegal tobacco products.

In addition to this new legislation, we will continue to work with our partners to get their best advice as the government moves forward to help prevent young people from becoming addicted to tobacco, make it easier for smokers to get the help they need to quit, and reduce demand for all tobacco products, both legal and illegal.

I am very pleased to announce that our new investment of \$5 million adds to the base funding for smoke-free Ontario. Preventing young people from ever taking up this deadly habit is the core of our approach. To help smokers quit, the government is providing more ways for smokers to get the help they need. We are also exploring ways to help employers and unions to assist workers in jobs and workplaces, where smoking increases health risk.

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Our government is proud of what we have accomplished. Today, we are taking the next significant step toward our goal of a smoke-free Ontario. I am calling on all MPPs to join us in protecting our young people. Together we can help them make healthier choices that do not involve the use of tobacco of any kind. I look forward to working with my colleagues on these important next steps toward a smoke-free Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Further debate?

Mrs. Julia Munro: I'm pleased to join the debate this morning on the contraband issue.

I think the first thing I want to say is that people in Ontario have been waiting almost eight years for the government to take action on this issue. What we see today, and from the point when the legislation was introduced, is what I think can generously be described as a rather tepid response. The issue has been on the table for several years, and it's disappointing that the government has chosen the final days in the final session of this Parliament to introduce legislation.

Our party has demanded action for a long time. Various members of our caucus have championed this particular issue. Certainly, the member for Haldimand-Norfolk has asked you to close illegal smoke shacks more times, frankly, than I can count. Again, my colleague from Nepean-Carleton, who has already spoken this morning, asked you to take action. Clearly, the response of people such as them, and me as well, is that it's disappointing to see how little action is being taken.

The issue of contraband tobacco is a problem created almost entirely by government action; specifically, the question of taxation on tobacco. In this country, taxation can range up to 72% of cost. When you look at the cost of legal tobacco today, \$50 out of \$80 is federal and provincial taxes. In contrast to that \$80 average cost, the cheapest contraband can cost as little as \$11 for the same 200 cigarettes.

We should remember that the last time contraband became a problem in the early 1990s, the response of the federal and provincial governments of the day was a huge tax cut. With that, of course, came a fall in the demand for contraband tobacco. It really is incumbent on the government to either significantly reduce the tax on tobacco, to discourage the proliferation of law-breaking, or properly enforce the law, neither of which is currently happening.

The other thing that I think people overlook is why it's really, really important to understand how contraband is worse than legally sold tobacco products. First, of course, is the issue of crime. The sale of contraband is largely run through organized crime groups that use certain opportunities to smuggle, manufacture and sell their products, both on and off reserve.

The other thing about this is the fact that, of course, the sale of legal tobacco is age-restricted and the sale of illegal tobacco is not. I know that one thing that's very clear—and the convenience store association has provided a demonstration of it—is that legal tobacco retailers are very conscious of their social responsibility in selling age-restricted items.

This week, we had the report provided to us on actually measuring the difference between the convenience stores, Brewers Retail and the LCBO. It's a very clear demonstration of what we have already known: that the convenience stores, frankly, have been better stewards of age-restricted retail goods than the alcohol-related.

I think that you can see that this is just like trying to put out a fire with a little puff of wind. It's not blowing out a candle; it's an endemic problem across this province. One of the things that we know is that it constitutes

almost 50% of the total market. Through analysis of cigarette butts, we're able to identify the point of origin or manufacture of legal and illegal ones.

It's very difficult to say to the public that they should pay \$80 instead of \$11. People feel that there's an inherent injustice with that kind of disparity, and so they tend to take this on as a personal thing, as opposed to a law-breaking issue. They don't think, because they feel the tax is so unfair, that they're doing anything wrong, whereas in fact, they are certainly doing things wrong on a number of fronts. The fact is the government loses close to \$500 million of revenue annually—

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: Over.

Mrs. Julia Munro: It could easily be over that \$500 million, because of the fact that we see a continual growth in that.

We see legitimate business threatened by the contraband sales. Certainly, as the critic for small business—to think that this is a government problem that they could fix, and instead, they're prepared to allow illegal tobacco in the hands of youth. They are forfeiting significant revenue to the government. They are willing to watch legitimate business go bankrupt, go under. They are also willing to allow a significant part of the community to be involved in organized crime—and obviously only growing that particular area.

The question of all of the efforts made by health promotion on the sale of tobacco and the effect on young people makes it look pretty paltry, in the sense of the reality, when you can go to the high schools and see the consumption of illegal tobacco. It seems like a tremendous waste of money and, I would argue, even harassment on the part of convenience stores that are selling legal tobacco, that the government is spending money on making sure that these people sell age-restricted tobacco products appropriately and, at the same time, turning a blind eye while all of the illegal sales continue to flourish and grow.

I think that for us, we would view that the government has made an extremely tepid response to a very serious problem. It's a serious problem in terms of revenue, it's a serious problem in terms of youth and it's a serious problem in terms of organized crime. It is, again, something that, with more vigorous interest in this file, the government could actually have had a much better handle on.

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In summing up, I think that we have to continue to put pressure on the government. Certainly in our platform, which is Changebook, I know that we have committed to a much more vigorous effort in reducing contraband tobacco and the kinds of effects it has, quite frankly, throughout our community. People are becoming more and more conscious of the reality and the impact that contraband tobacco has. We are committed to using the resources of government to make sure that we do more than simply recognize the importance of reducing the number of smokers in our community.

We need to do a great deal more, and on October 6, we hope to have the opportunity to be able to, in fact,

create legitimate tobacco sales and then look at reducing tobacco use.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Further debate?

M^{me} France Gélinas: I will try to use my time wisely, as I know that I only have 20 minutes to talk about this most important issue, which is contraband tobacco. It has been said, but it is worth repeating, that tobacco is the only product that, when used as directed, will kill half of its users. This makes no sense whatsoever.

What brought me here is really the desire to change health promotion in this province. I know that lots of good work can be done at the local level, but sometimes you need governments to change the laws to make it easier for people at the local level to effect change that will help keep people healthy; that will help create healthier societies and communities. That is one of the issues where it doesn't matter where you go in Ontario; we all recognize it as a serious threat to our health, to the health of our youth and to the health of our community.

I've been here for close to four years now. After asking for work on the contraband tobacco file, at the eleventh hour the government comes out with Bill 186, An Act to amend the Tobacco Tax Act. This is their timid effort at trying to deal with something this important, that has such dramatic effects on so many people in Ontario, and we do this when there are only a few days left in the sitting. So here we have this most important bill that, to me, the way it is written now, the possibility that it will be successful in curbing contraband tobacco is slim, but the possibility that it will drive a wedge between our communities and will create more harm than good is real. It is immediate and it is serious.

What do we do with this? The government puts in a time allocation motion. This is a fancy term that means, first of all, that people found out on May 18 that there were going to be public hearings on May 19. To their credit, eight groups from Toronto managed to make it under the four-hour deadline that they had to submit their names and show up. But this is not just a Toronto issue; there are people throughout Ontario who would have liked to come forward—there are best practices developing in every corner of this province when it has to do with contraband tobacco—but we never had a chance to hear from any of them. We never had a chance to hear from people in the northeast, in the northwest, in eastern Ontario; in the southwest, where the tobacco growers are, where most of the contraband trade takes place, because this thing was brought in at the eleventh hour, and then it was time-allocated. We had those truncated public hearings. As I said, four hours to put your name on the list is not really conducive to people from northeastern Ontario being full participants in this debate. Here we are on third reading, where I have no illusion that any changes will be made to that bill.

Here we will have a bill whose sole purpose is a punitive approach to a problem that cannot be solved by punishing people. You don't deal with tobacco addiction by punishing people; it is useless. As a health promotion

strategy, it rates as minus 100. It won't work. You don't deal with addiction by punishing people. There are other ways, but none of those are in the bill. You cannot see any of this forthcoming. This is the day before the House rises. I'm not going to see a well-structured tobacco strategy coming forward that would include contraband tobacco. All I see is this Bill 186, the punitive approach to dealing with addiction, to dealing with contraband.

The minute this bill was out the door, it ran into problems. I think I will quote some of the headlines that came out when the bill was first released: "Proposed Amendments to Tobacco Tax Act More Punitive than Concerned with Health," "Ontario's New Illegal Cigarette Laws Not Enough to Curb Smuggling," and the headlines keep going.

Everybody knows that, yes, this is a little step that could be perceived as going in the right direction. It's easy to stand here and quote statistics as to the number of deaths and the damage that tobacco use does to our community. We all know it. We've all seen it on the ground. We've all read the statistics. Tobacco kills people. It kills them by giving them cancer and all sorts of other diseases: heart disease, major organ disease. None of those deaths are pleasant, and the rate of it keeps going through the roof. We're looking at probably one billion deaths in this century alone. This is a lot of people.

Don't you think that you would like your government to bring forward a well-thought-out strategy that will hold water, that will give the people who have the addiction the support they need, that will give the people who are supporting this trade the time to say that cigarettes are going to be harder and harder to get? Let's get on with stopping smoking, and let's make sure that we don't encourage the next generation of smokers.

My colleague from Brant and I brought forward the cigarillo bill. Single-size flavoured cigarillos had one goal—that's it; that's all: to hook kids on tobacco so that we could grow the next generation of addicted smokers. That's all they were there for. No smoker really wants to smoke cherry-flavoured and chocolate-flavoured cigarillos. They were there at a buck apiece for kids to get hooked. After the bill received royal assent, 18 months went by before we moved ahead—18 months.

Mr. Dave Levac: Shame.

M^{me} France Gélinas: It is a shame. I don't know how many kids got addicted to smoking and are now part of the ever-growing number of smokers in Ontario. Let's not fool ourselves here: The rate of smokers in Ontario has flatlined; it has not gone down.

We can say that the government has put forward one of the most aggressive tobacco controls that we should all be proud of. Sure; if you like to be proud of your laws, go ahead. I'd like to be proud of the results. I would be proud if I could see that the number of smokers in Ontario is steadily declining, but we're not seeing that. We're seeing it flatline. Frankly, where I'm coming from, we're seeing increases. What is there to be proud of? We could have all the laws in the world, but if the results are that our kids are still picking up the habit and that more

and more people in Ontario continue to smoke—which we all know will lead to more death and will lead to billions of dollars in health care spending, not to mention the human trauma, the human cost of those horrific diseases—there's nothing to be proud of.

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Does it require action? Absolutely it requires action—right here, right now. But what have I got? I've got Bill 186. I couldn't be more disappointed if they had tried. Bill 186 is a finance bill that deals with the tax act, that basically brings in a new punitive approach to the act. Police officers will have the ability to seize tobacco products in plain view. People who buy contraband tobacco may end up going to court or may end up having to pay fines.

But let's be clear here: Contraband tobacco has been normalized in our province. This government has allowed it to grow and flourish for so many years that, frankly, most of the people who go and buy contraband tobacco have no idea that they're doing something illegal. They are law-abiding citizens who would never do something to break the law if they at least knew that it was illegal. But when you see half of the smokers from the Sudbury Regional Police lining up at the smoke shack, well, that must be fine. It must be a legal thing; otherwise, police officers wouldn't be doing it.

It is now part of the norm. It is how you buy cigarettes in Nickel Belt. This is why, when I go home at night, I see this big line of traffic trying to hang a left on regional road 55 to go into Atikameksheng Anishnawbek to go to the smoke shack. It is part of life in northern Ontario. This is how people buy cigarettes, this is where they buy it, and this is how everybody does it. Why would anybody think that they were doing something illegal when it is in plain view and when it has been going on for such a long time?

When 80-year-old Aunt Lou drives to Atikameksheng Anishnawbek, she goes and buys her two packs a day of cigarettes like she's done for the last 10 years. She doesn't think she's breaking the law. All of a sudden, she may be pulled over by the cops. She won't get a ticket; apparently, she will have to go to court. I can just imagine how many people will be quite surprised by what happens to them. How could that be?

Yet none of the education that needs to happen and none of the health promotion that needs to be tied into this is part of the bill. When I tried to bring it forward in committee—at clause-by-clause, I tried to bring changes to that bill, to say you cannot just do this; you have to let people know that they're buying illegal tobacco, that what they are doing is illegal, and there will be consequences to this—I was told that it will be published on e-Laws. I don't even know what e-Laws is. I certainly don't know how to access it. And I can tell you that Aunt Lou doesn't know about it either, but she knows where to buy smokes.

This is not going to work. We have an opportunity to do things here. We have an opportunity to pass laws that will make our province better. Why do we let those

opportunities go by? Why do we bring forward bills like Bill 186?

I have to quote from some of the First Nations. Two chiefs from the First Nations came to the committee hearings. One happened to be in Toronto; otherwise, he would never have made it. That's the chief of the Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians. He started his presentation by saying, "I have left our assembly to make this presentation, so I just want it noted that it's on their good graces that I appear before you."

The first thing he said when he came to the committee was that he opposed the bill. He opposed the bill because contraband tobacco is a complex issue. We all know its effects on health, but "the reality is that for First Nations engaged in the tobacco industry," that now supports households and finances community development. There are also "legitimate, federally licensed and inspected businesses—a point that has gone ignored in this debate." We must not forget that First Nations are under the control—very much so—of the federal government.

The Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians has adamantly opposed Bill 186 as it is written, and they have opposed the process undertaken by Ontario to pass it through this Legislature. They oppose it because Bill 186 infringes upon the rights of First Nations people, straight and simple. First Nations have used and traded tobacco since time immemorial and have never surrendered this inherent right. It is an intrusion on First Nations jurisdiction and a violation of section 35 of the Canadian Constitution. First Nations have the right and the ability to transport tobacco between First Nations land.

Their second issue with the bill was jurisdiction. Under section 25 of Bill 186, we, the government of Ontario, would be introducing provincial regulation on to First Nations reserve land, which is something that has never been done and, from what this chief was saying, something that First Nations don't want happening. They saw this as significant because under Canadian law, provincial jurisdiction on reserve land and its authority to make arrangements with First Nations is unsubstantiated, yet, in this bill, we take it as a given.

They also quoted section 91 of the Constitution, which clearly established dealing with First Nations as a federal responsibility.

Wouldn't it have been better to sit down with First Nations to have those collaborative agreements worked out? Make no mistake: First Nations care about their children. They don't want them picking up the habit. They don't want members of their community to smoke, not any more than any one of us does. Do they consider tobacco as a threat to their health? Absolutely. Used in ceremonies, no, but when you start to smoke it the way white people do, it certainly is a threat; they recognize this. They welcome health promotion strategies. They welcome ways that will help First Nations to curb the habit and not pick up tobacco just as much as everybody else. Members of First Nations die of lung cancer at an alarming rate. They also have a greater rate of smokers

within their communities than we do in Ontario at large. They recognize it as a serious problem and as a complex problem that needs a well-rounded strategy.

To impose legislation on to First Nations land, when they come and tell us clearly that we have no jurisdiction, to me is looking for problems. What was more offensive of it all is that they were notified the morning of, that the bill was coming forward.

If we want this to succeed, we need partnership; we need buy-in. This is what health promotion is all about: to bring about a level of education so that people rally in, to listen to each other, to see how we can move forward together. But that's not what we did. We told the First Nations, "We're going to impose laws on your land; we're going to be able to seize tobacco in plain view; we're going to be able to stop the transfer of the tobacco between First Nations," all issues that they have raised already as saying that those are problematic.

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Will there be problems with that bill? Well, it is written in black and white for anybody who cares to see. We know that it will bring divisiveness, we know that it will drive a wedge between communities, and we know that it will bring us more problems than solutions yet on an issue that we all agree needs action.

When the RNAO came and presented, when the Ontario Campaign for Action on Tobacco came, when the chief medical officer of health came and when Toronto Public Health came, they all said the same thing: Sure, there is room for changes to taxation, but if we want to be successful in really achieving our goal, which is less and less people in Ontario smoking, then a punitive approach is not the way to go. A comprehensive health promotion strategy would be the way to go, but this is nowhere to be seen. We've seen good health promotion programs, youth peer programs, the funding being cut. This is very problematic. It is a timid step that will solve a few problems and create many more.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Further debate? Does any other member wish to speak?

Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 17, 2011, I'm now required to put the question.

Ms. Smith has moved third reading of Bill 186, An Act to amend the Tobacco Tax Act.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

A recorded vote being required, it will be deferred until after question period today.

Third reading vote deferred.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I move that the orders for second and third reading of the following private bills shall be called consecutively, and the questions on the motions for second and third reading of the bills put immediately without debate: Bill Pr32, An Act to revive

1518186 Ontario Inc.; Bill Pr46, An Act to revive Faradale Farms Ltd.; and Bill Pr47, An Act to revive Big A Amusements Ltd.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Do we have consent? Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

1518186 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2011

Mr. Rinaldi moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr32, An Act to revive 1518186 Ontario Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

1518186 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2011

Mr. Rinaldi moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr32, An Act to revive 1518186 Ontario Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be named as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

FARADALE FARMS LTD. ACT, 2011

Mr. Martiniuk moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr46, An Act to revive Faradale Farms Ltd.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

FARADALE FARMS LTD. ACT, 2011

Mr. Martiniuk moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr46, An Act to revive Faradale Farms Ltd.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

BIG A AMUSEMENTS LTD. ACT, 2011

Mr. Delaney moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr47, An Act to revive Big A Amusements Ltd.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

BIG A AMUSEMENTS LTD. ACT, 2011

Mr. Delaney moved third reading of the following bill:
Bill Pr47, An Act to revive Big A Amusements Ltd.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Orders of the day?

Hon. Monique M. Smith: We have no further business this morning, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): There being no further business, this House is in recess until 10:30 of the clock.

The House recessed from 0956 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: I'd like the House to give a warm welcome to a constituent of mine, Julie McLeod. She's an actor from Oakville. She's co-producing and starring in a film on Laura Secord and she is here today to study the portrait of Laura Secord that we have on the third floor. She's in the members' gallery with us today.

Mr. Frank Klees: I'd like members to join me in welcoming Annie Wang, who is a Queen's University student and, to my delight, is a summer student in our constituency office in Aurora. Welcome, Annie.

Mr. Rick Johnson: I'd like to introduce, in the west members' gallery, Debbie Brown and Ted Rodd from Lindsay. Ted just recently celebrated his 65th birthday, and we welcome him to the Legislature.

Mr. Jeff Leal: In the members' east gallery today, I'd like to welcome Brian Shury and his daughter, Lily. They won a silent auction item, having lunch with their MPP, and the fact is, it's unique because they were flying from Peterborough international airport to the island airport to be with us today.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I'd like to welcome to the House today two very good friends of mine from North Bay who, I've known since I was born. Ab and Betty Dennis are here today. They're great supporters and good corporate citizens of the city of North Bay, and we welcome them.

I'd also like to take this chance, because this seems to be the hottest ticket in town—my staff didn't get in yesterday, but they're here today: Phia Sanchez, Adrienne Guthrie, Karen Berkeley, David Palmer and, of course, Krystina Ceccarelli is here again today, my chief of staff. Last night during my tribute, I was remiss in not naming the only staff member who was actually in the House, working hard, taking pictures: Paul Tye. They're all here today with us, and we thank them.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: It's my pleasure to introduce and welcome and ask all members to welcome some people from Hamilton with the Jobs Action Centre: Bob

Sutton, Donna Muir, Louise Schmerega, Lynn Grant, David Chandler and Kevin Carey.

Hon. Harinder S. Takhar: I'd like to welcome to the House Mike Frisina. He was my intern in my office last summer. He's a graduate student from McMaster, and I want to welcome him to Queen's Park.

Hon. Gerry Phillips: This is a school group visiting us—not from my riding, but their teacher is a very good friend of mine, Mr. Joe Bush. The students here are from Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Elementary School in York. Welcome to the Legislature.

Mrs. Julia Munro: I'd like to introduce Alex Millier, who is an intern here and who has come to observe question period. Welcome.

Mr. Phil McNeely: I'd like to introduce a constituent of mine from Ottawa—Orléans to the gallery today. Meghan Pugh has been a student of the professional ballet program at the National Ballet School here in Toronto since the fall of 2005, and graduates this June. She will be going to Stuttgart, Germany, to train for three weeks. She is here today with a friend, Ms. Alysha Pacheco, from the same program, and she's from the riding of Kitchener—Waterloo. Please join me in welcoming them to Queen's Park.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: To the last folks: If you ever get over to the national ballet, you may get to meet my son, who is the principal trumpet over there.

But that wasn't really what I stood up to say. I stood up to introduce Richard Francella, who is in the members' east gallery. Richard is the president of the Young Liberals at the University of Guelph, and he's my summer intern this year.

Mr. Bill Mauro: I'm pleased to introduce today from Thunder Bay, in the members' west gallery, the chief of emergency medical services in Thunder Bay, Norm Gale. Norm is also the president of the Association of Municipal Emergency Medical Services of Ontario. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Michael Gravelle: I want to welcome Mr. Gale as well, but accompanying him is Mr. Neal Roberts, the director of emergency services for Middlesex county. Welcome, Neal and Norm.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I am absolutely delighted that several members of my staff are here today. These are the people who make my job look easy. Megan Primeau, Meaghan Connolly, Sharon Navarro, Carly Foerster, Josie Verrilli, interns Brooke Auld and Yalda Paydar, and Paris Meilleur and Colin Le Fevre are all joining us today.

Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde: I would like to welcome a good group from the far east, from Glengarry—Prescott—Russell: My lovely wife, Gisèle, is here today again. Also, I have Madame Chenier, the lady who keeps sending me all the press clippings, every day, from all the 11 weekly papers and daily papers from my area; Rhéal Filion, my accompagnateur; Jean Simon Schoenhalz; Christine Pelletier, my legislative assistant; and Lyse Desforges, my EA.

Last night, during my tribute, I forgot to mention three employees of my own from the constituency office: Lise Clark from the Rockland office, Sylvie Labrosse from the Hawkesbury office, and Martine Nadeau from Hawkesbury.

Welcome to you all.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the member from Welland, to welcome Michael Aziz to the Legislature today. Welcome to Queen's Park.

On behalf of the member from Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale, I'd like to welcome a group of political science graduates from McMaster University, who are visiting Queen's Park today. Welcome to the Legislature.

I'd like all members to join me in welcoming to the Speaker's gallery today Ray and Gloria Bliss, parents of one of our press gallery members, Paul Bliss. They are visiting from Fort Erie. Welcome to Queen's Park. I discovered that Ray is the ultimate question period junkie, and now he's finally going to see it live. Enjoy.

I'd also like to welcome to the Speaker's gallery today the Minister of Environment for British Columbia, Minister Terry Lake, and his executive assistant, Sabrina Loiacono. Welcome to Queen's Park, Minister.

ORAL QUESTIONS

TAXATION

Mr. Tim Hudak: My question is to the Premier. For generations, Ontario families who worked hard and played by the rules had a bright future ahead of them, and Ontario PCs believe they will once again, but something has to change in the province of Ontario and move our great province forward. Premier, our plan, Changebook, will give average families relief from the McGuinty Liberals' skyrocketing hydro bills and surprise tax increases that are taking bigger and bigger bites out of the family budgets. We will give average, middle-class families broad-based income tax relief to spend on their priorities, not the McGuinty Liberals'. Premier, why are you going the other way, with a carbon tax increase?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I appreciate the energy—and perhaps it may be more properly categorized as histrionics and bombast—but I don't believe it. I don't believe it. Ultimately, I think Ontarians will be looking to our values to see who best represents their values: hard-working, "keep your sleeves rolled up, do what it takes to build a bright future for your kids and grandkids" kinds of values.

I'll give you one example. Yesterday, I visited Chrysler with the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. As a result of efforts that we made together, representing the values of Ontario families, we invested in supporting that sector. There are now 9,000 direct Chrysler jobs as a result of the support that we put in

there. The leader of the official opposition called that corporate welfare.

We don't believe that standing up for families and standing up for their jobs is corporate welfare; we call it doing the right thing.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: Premier, the Ontario Liberals' tax-and-spend values are out of date. They're out of touch, they're way before their best-before date, and that's why families want change in the province of Ontario.

1040

The Ontario PCs are the only party to put out a fully costed plan. It is called Changebook. It will provide broad, meaningful relief that families are—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): My apologies. We had an amazing four and a half hours in this chamber last night, and you could have heard a pin drop. I'm finding it very difficult to hear the Leader of the Opposition, and I would ask all members to be respectful.

Please continue.

Mr. Tim Hudak: Now I understand that New Democrats will put out their plan. Where is the McGuinty Liberals' plan? Why are you keeping it secret from the province of Ontario and the taxpayers who pay the bills? I know: because the McGuinty Liberals are going to bring in a Liberal carbon tax and increase the HST. Families can't afford it, Premier.

Will you state categorically that you will not increase taxes for the third time on hard-working Ontario families?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I want to just take the opportunity to thank my honourable colleague for endorsing the Ontario health premium. I want to thank him for endorsing the HST as well. He railed against both of those for a long, long time, but now he has seen at least a little bit of the light and understands the value of keeping those here.

Yesterday, we did something positive in terms of working with families, representing their values and supporting thousands of jobs in the auto sector.

Today, we did something else on behalf of Ontario families. We're absolutely committed to securing a bright future for their children and their grandchildren. We laid out the final two phases of our full-day kindergarten program. I want to say to Ontario families—because I know my honourable colleague opposite claims he stands for full-day kindergarten, but they voted against it. They called it a boondoggle; they called it a shiny new car; they called it a frill. I'd ask Ontarians to keep in mind who in their heart of hearts has stood up for this program from day one, who's prepared to drive this all the way through.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Final supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: The question, Premier, is: Who is going to raise taxes once again on Ontario families? Who is going to put hydro bills through the roof? Who is on track to doubling the provincial—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock. The Minister of Infrastructure will withdraw the comment that he just made.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I withdraw, Speaker.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The Minister of Research and Innovation and the honourable member from Welland: If you want to have a discussion, take it outside.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I can send somebody over Niagara Falls in a barrel.

Please continue.

Mr. Tim Hudak: One thing is guaranteed, you can take it to the bank, a sure-fire bet, 100%: The McGuinty Liberals will increase taxes on Ontario families, send hydro bills through the roof and waste your money on secret backroom deals. That's why families like Changebook and want to see change here in the province of Ontario.

Premier, Changebook includes doubling the caregiver tax credit. That's compassion and relief for Ontario families struggling with McGuinty Liberal tax and hydro increases. And we will invest in 40,000 long-term-care beds: 5,000 new and 35,000 brought to modern standards. Those are our priorities. Why—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Apparently, they're going to do it all and we don't have to worry about anything ever again. I don't believe that. I don't think Ontario families are going to believe that. We've heard that before. We saw that movie before.

They have 229 promises so far, but their numbers don't add up. We know it's going to mean cuts for Ontario families. There are just a few ways the slick book doesn't add up.

They've got a debt retirement charge, and they don't include the cost of their debt retirement charge promise. That's \$1.4 billion missing from their plan. They know that 70% of all the money we invest in program spending goes into our schools and our health care. They have a multi-billion-dollar gaping hole. There's only one way they can address that, only one way they can fill that: to cut our schools and cut our health—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

Mr. Tim Hudak: Premier, just moments ago you said you haven't even read our plan, Changebook. I encourage you to do so: relief for families, setting priorities like health care and education, and ending the waste, fraud and secret deals that have become the hallmark of the McGuinty Liberal government.

Premier, with all due respect, I'd love to read your plan, but you're keeping it hidden until after the October

6 election campaign. Talk about secret deals, Premier: You have a well-worn reputation for secret, backroom deals—your Samsung deal, your 3% raise for OPSEU workers, paying prison guards bonuses to show up for work, merit pay bonuses for eHealth bureaucrats. Premier, isn't it time to end—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: A lot of negativity, a lot of anger, a lot of resentment, but I just don't think that's in keeping with the expectations Ontario families have of their leaders. I think they want us to put forward a positive and optimistic vision.

I want to remind my honourable colleague of what Ontario families have done so well by coming together and building together. In our schools, our test scores are up by 13%; our grad rates are up by 14%. If you take a look at our adult population, we have one of the highest rates of post-secondary education in the world, and when it comes to academic results, we've now cracked the top 10 globally. That's what families—moms and dads and students—have done working with teachers in our schools alone.

In health care, because of the efforts of our doctors and nurses and everybody who is committed to our public health care system, wait times are down, we've got more hospitals, more MRIs are getting done faster, more CTs—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: Premier, you've really got to work on getting your story straight. You accuse us of negativity. You just practically accused us of everything from bringing locusts into the province of Ontario to taking away firstborns. Nobody believes you, Premier. Nobody believes you anymore, and that's why they want change here in our province.

Our plan, Changebook, is there to give families the relief they need, to end your secret deals and waste like eHealth. Where is your plan? Where is Premier McGuinty's tax book plan? One thing we know for sure: He's going to keep that hidden from the province of Ontario because he's going to bring in a carbon tax and he's going to increase the HST.

Ontario families say, "Enough is enough." They want change. They want to see Changebook. Won't you agree, Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Again, we're used to the railing and ranting and raving. You might call them the new three Rs of the Conservative Party. But again, when it comes to standing up for families and being informed by their values, I'll give you three specific examples where they came up short.

We said we wanted to cut our drug costs by half a billion dollars. They took another side. They wouldn't stand with families. Some 400,000 auto sector jobs were at risk and hung in the balance. They took another side; they wouldn't stand up for our families. We've now got 50,000 new job opportunities as part of our clean energy plan. They're taking another side once again.

They won't stand up for our families, and they won't stand up for our jobs. They still don't understand Ontario families. They roll up their sleeves, they work hard and they do what it takes to build a bright future for their children and their grandchildren. Those are their values. Those are our values.

1050

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Final supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: Now we see the second change in Liberal talk—he puts “job opportunities” all of a sudden. Nobody believed your phony job numbers from the get-go, Premier.

Let's talk about Liberal values. This is a Premier who said he would not increase taxes, and he increased taxes over and over again on Ontario families; a Premier who said that hydro bills would go up 1%, and that wasn't true either; a Premier who said smart meters will save you money—not true either; a Premier who made sure that his Liberal friends got rich from the eHealth boondoggle. That says something about Liberal values and why people want to see change in Ontario: so our great province can lead again.

I'm asking the Premier: When will you put forward your tax book plan? Why won't you be honest with the people of Ontario about your plan to increase the—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: It's an interesting approach. I think it's already starting to wear thin, and we're not anywhere near the election.

I do want to thank my honourable colleague once again for supporting the HST in Ontario. I also want to thank him for supporting the Ontario health premium; I know he has railed against that over and over again.

Most importantly, I want to thank Ontario families. We have come so far together. We have turned our province around. We are on the right track. We have better schools today, by any objective measure. We have better health care in the province of Ontario. We have a stronger economy. Jobs are coming back to Ontario. We are leading the country when it comes to emerging from that terrible recession. All of these things have happened.

We had a plan that we couldn't possibly execute or deliver without the support of Ontario families. We're going to continue working with them. They don't want to go back. They don't want to go off track. They want better schools, they want better health care and they want a strong economy, and that comes from working together—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

TAXATION

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Premier. In uncertain times, people are hoping their government will make their needs a priority. Instead, the Premier has made life much more expensive and adopted

Conservative priorities like a \$1.8-billion corporate tax giveaway. With banks declaring record profits this week, how can the Premier say that they need any help at all?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: My honourable colleague hopefully at some point will acknowledge some of the good things that we have done. Some of them have been informed in part by some of the thinking that has existed in that party for some time as well.

Let me just pick out the Ontario child benefit. It's benefiting 1.3 million children who are growing up in struggling families. It's the first benefit of its kind in the country. It is a considerable investment; it's over \$1 billion every year. We're doing it because we think it's in keeping with Ontario family values. They want to ensure that no family is left behind. They want to ensure that every child has the best possible start. We were informed by those values and we came up with that initiative, and I'd ask my honourable colleague to acknowledge that as an important, responsible, thoughtful, progressive and, in fact, necessary initiative to support our families.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I'm talking about the big bank benefit. This week, Royal Bank and Scotiabank each said they made \$1.5 billion last quarter. Profits at Bank of Montreal reached \$800 million. CIBC didn't fare too badly either at about \$675 million, thank you very much. They don't need any public help to succeed. They're doing very, very well. In tough times, why has the Premier made it his priority to give them a tax cut?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I recommend to my honourable colleague that she take a look at a number of reports that have been put out by thought groups traditionally considered on the left, like Hugh Mackenzie. They talked about our package of tax reforms, and the title of the report says it all: Not a Tax Grab After All. He points out that if you divide the families into three groups, the lower-income families come out ahead as a result of our tax reforms, the middle-income families are about the same and the upper-income families come out a little bit behind.

One of the approaches that I would recommend to my honourable colleague is that she no longer pursue this whole notion that somehow you've got to get at big business to satisfy the needs of the poor. We have found a way to ensure that we support the growth of our economy at the same time that we support low-income families. We've increased the minimum wage. We've developed the Ontario child benefit. We've put in place full-day kindergarten to make sure all our kids from all socio-economic groups—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Final supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The financial sector alone will receive \$500 million of the Premier's corporate tax giveaway. That's more than enough to take the HST off home heating or hire 5,000 nurses or fund over 10,000 new long-term-care beds for seniors who need help. Why has the Premier made this corporate tax cut—this corporate tax giveaway—his priority?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Again, I would say to my honourable colleague that I want to recommend to her some of the stuff that has been said by folks who are traditionally on the left. This is what the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives study said. They said the HST “is virtually revenue neutral when viewed as part of a total tax package that includes ... sales and property tax credits and a significant decrease in personal income tax rates.”

I’d ask my honourable colleague to acknowledge that we have cut income taxes permanently for 94% of Ontarians; nine out of 10 Ontarians are now getting a permanent income tax cut. If you add that to the fact that we’re reducing our electricity bills by 10%, if you add that to the fact that we keep increasing the minimum wage—we’ve increased it, I think, seven years out of seven—those are good examples of our commitment to ensuring that we bring fairness to our responsibilities as a government, making sure that we don’t compromise economic growth, at the same time that we support families, especially families who are struggling.

TAXATION

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also to the Premier. After watching the HST drive up the cost of heating oil, hydro, gas, and diesel, Grace Jorgenson from Keewatin started a petition, on her own, that has been circulating across northwestern Ontario. On that petition she has gathered, just by herself, over 500 signatures. Why are the McGuinty Liberals putting tax giveaways to Canada’s richest corporations ahead of practical help to make Grace’s life more affordable?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I think one of the things that that particular individual who has taken this initiative on her own—and I commend her for that. I’m sorry; her name escapes me. But I’m sure my honourable colleague will want to bring to her attention the energy tax credit that we’ve put in place for northerners, to make sure that she’s aware of that.

Just so we’re clear about the numbers here, over the course of the next three years, families will benefit to the tune of \$12 billion in terms of reduced taxation. For businesses, it’s about \$5 billion. It’s \$5 billion for businesses and \$12 billion for families. That gives you some sense of the balance and the thoughtfulness that we’ve brought to this.

In addition to those income tax cuts that I have referenced, there’s the Ontario child benefit, and there’s a children’s activity tax credit, which is \$50 each year to help pay for sports or art and music classes. We’re not saying it’s a huge deal, but it’s something that’s important.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Families in northern, eastern, rural and urban Ontario are really struggling. Sue Kelly from Ottawa writes this: “The cost of living is soaring and salaries are not increasing anywhere near the increased rate of basic necessities.” Do banks really need

public dollars, or should we be focusing on making Sue’s life easier and more affordable?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I don’t think it has ever been out of fashion to attack banks, and I don’t intend to stand here and defend banks, but I can tell you that one of the fastest-growing job sectors that we’ve had in the province of Ontario is in financial services. They’re employing thousands and thousands more people every year. Beyond that, we’ve also established ourselves now as being without par globally in terms of our reputation, as offering a well-regulated banking industry that ensures that we get it right and that we continue to employ more and more people.

At some point, I’d ask my honourable colleague to in fact commend the financial services sector for its continuing growth and for the ever-increasing number of moms and dads it’s hiring on an almost daily basis.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: It’s sad that the Premier doesn’t know that the banks and insurance companies laid off 25,000 workers in the past year.

Natalie Beneteau from the Essex area writes, “Due to downsizing, I was forced to take early retirement and was fortunate to find part-time work ... to make ends meet. The constant increases in energy costs, gasoline hikes and soaring cost of living are a great drain to the minimal income I receive.”

My question remains: Why is the Premier helping banks and insurance companies and ignoring women like Natalie?

1100

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this.

I would recommend to my honourable colleague an evolution that was presided over by Tony Blair, which I think was very helpful to the United Kingdom. He said, “The principles of the Labour Party are its values: the belief in a fair deal for ordinary people, social justice, progress. But the way to do that is not to tax a few more people at the top,” and, “In the past, social democrats became identified with high taxes, especially on business. Modern social democrats recognize that in the right circumstances, tax reform and tax cuts can play a critical part in meeting their wider social objectives.”

“For instance, corporate tax cuts raise profitability and strengthen the incentives to invest.”

I would recommend that evolution by a progressive labour party to my honourable colleague.

HYDRO RATES

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: For over a year now, the Ontario PC caucus has been raising with the Premier the concerns of Ontario families, who are squeezed financially and struggle to pay their hydro bills. They want to know that they have a Premier who understands them.

Sir, I ask you: How much did you pay for your hydro bill this month?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Energy.

Hon. Brad Duguid: Frankly, I think what Ontario families want to know is, what is the difference between their scheme and our long-term plan? Their intention is to dismantle our clean energy programs, destroy our clean energy economy and put thousands of Ontarians out of work. I don't think Ontario families want to go there.

I think Ontario families want to keep building a stronger economy. I think Ontario families want us to keep investing in those jobs that we're providing for families right across this province. Their slick book has what I would call pretty warped priorities. We're creating jobs for Ontario families; they're creating jobs for Ontario inmates.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I asked the Premier how much he paid for his hydro last month. I checked my bill; it was \$244. I am astonished that either you don't know how much your bill is or the energy minister is paying your bill.

After eight years, Premier McGuinty is simply too tired and too out of touch with Ontario families. Every family in Ontario knows what their hydro bill is, because it's the bill they dread the most.

Families need change, and we will offer change in Tim Hudak's Changebook. Changebook shows how an Ontario PC government will help families save \$275 when we take the HST and the debt retirement charge off those bills. It's money they can spend to balance their own budget, put into their mortgage or spend on their own. But your crazy energy experiments are costing Ontario families \$310.

How can you be so out of touch with Ontario families who need relief—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Minister?

Hon. Brad Duguid: I think the numbers the member opposite should be checking should be the numbers in her slick book, because they've got 229 reckless promises in the slick book and they've left a huge, gaping multi-billion-dollar hole that can only be made up one way, and that's by cutting things like education and health care.

Just to give you an example, they made a reckless promise to get rid of the debt retirement charge—which they created in the first place—by wishing it away. That's simply reckless. They can't wish away a \$14.8-billion stranded debt that they stuck us with. It's also reckless to hide from Ontario families their scheme to fire doctors, nurses and teachers.

Ontario families deserve better. They won't be fooled by their shifty slick book; they won't be fooled at all. They'll stand by us as we're creating jobs—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Rosario Marchese: My question is to the Premier. The news from Ontario schools just gets worse and

worse. Last month, we learned of the continued decline in teacher librarians in our schools and the closing of school libraries, and today, we learned from People for Education that—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Please. My apologies.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Member from Thunder Bay—Atikokan.

Please continue.

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Today, we learned from People for Education that there are deep inequities in the Ontario school system. For example, students at schools in lower-income neighbourhoods are more than twice as likely to be waiting for special education supports than students from wealthier areas.

Does the McGuinty government accept that students with special needs should wait longer for services if they are poor?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Education.

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: The honourable member has identified that, yes, People for Education has issued their report today. While I've had an opportunity to look at it very quickly—I read the executive summary; I do look forward to getting into the detail—I will also say to the people of this House that the document—we very much value the input that we received from this group.

One of the quotes that I thought was an important one to share with the group here is that they have recognized that "Among OECD countries, our 15-year-olds place in the top 10 in reading, writing, science and mathematics tests, and the vast majority of Ontario students in grades 3, 6 and 9 are getting C or better.... In randomized pan-Canadian tests of 13-year-olds, Ontario students ranked first among English-language schools in mathematics, reading and writing...."

This group also recognizes that our students are—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Try this quote: "Since 2005, the per-pupil amount in the" learning opportunity grant "has been reduced by 9%." According to them, "not all Ontario students have equal access either to the educational supports or to the enrichments that are vital components of a well-rounded education."

Students in schools with a high proportion of low-income students are less likely to get special education supports and less likely to have access to arts, technology and physical education programming. When will the government finally do something to ensure that Ontario students don't get a second-class education just because of their income level?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: I would also direct the honourable member and the members of this House to another quote in the report that says, "By international standards, Ontario can congratulate itself on being one of the jurisdictions where the effect of socio-economic

status on achievement is less than in many other countries." So we are doing some very good things. Teachers are doing very good things with students in our schools.

Our government has increased funding in our schools by 46%. In the most recent GSNs, we have spent \$2.5 billion to support students with special needs. We consult every year with our education partners to understand how we can better deliver those dollars to students in classrooms. We have made changes every year. Always we will continue to strive for excellence—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

NORTHERN ONTARIO DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Bill Mauro: My question is for the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. Northern ridings were overlooked for a very long time until our government came to power in 2003. Over the past eight years, we've seen record levels of investment in my riding of Thunder Bay–Atikokan and ridings right across the north. Now the opposition would like to give northerners a stronger voice and would like to focus on bringing jobs and investment to the north—or at least that's what it says in their slick book.

When our government brought forward a significant support package for forestry in northern Ontario and auto in southern Ontario, the opposition called it corporate welfare. When our government increased the northern Ontario heritage fund from \$60 million to \$100 million every year, in stark contrast to the NDP, which that took all \$60 million away from the northern Ontario heritage fund—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Lanark will withdraw the comment that he just made.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Withdraw.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The interjection from the Minister of Community Safety is not helpful.

Please get to your question.

Mr. Bill Mauro: Our government increased the northern Ontario heritage fund from \$60 million to \$100 million every year, in stark contrast to the NDP, who took all \$60 million away. They voted against it.

Minister, please outline some of the supports our government has brought forward for my riding of Thunder Bay–Atikokan and all northern ridings.

1110

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: It is important to note—especially today as we are walking away from a recession that none of us have seen before and recognizing the strength that is coming from the north, in particular because the Ontario government chose to partner with northern communities—when we increased that northern heritage fund from \$60 million to \$100 million, the opposition voted against that initiative. I find it pretty interesting that they are doing flip-flops of Herculean proportion now because they want to go and tell the

people of the north that somehow they support them. We know that a billion dollars to the forestry sector was necessary, as it was to the auto industry, and yet the opposition members opposed that.

Today, another flip-flop of epic proportion: They want to tell the north they're in favour of all of these jobs—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Bill Mauro: It's important to remind northern Ontario residents how the PC Party has flip-flopped on job creation and economic growth not only in northern Ontario but right across the province.

We've seen the members opposite publicly declare their opposition to the green energy industry, including, I would suspect, opposition to the conversion of the two coal plants in my riding of Thunder Bay–Atikokan—plants they have committed to closing. This represents 230 jobs saved, millions in tax base to the communities of Thunder Bay and Atikokan, and about \$300 million in construction work for the building trade unions in my community. The members opposite have established the fact that they would get rid of the FIT programs and renege on a Samsung deal—\$7 billion of private sector investment.

Minister, if these statements become reality, what would this mean for those people employed within Ontario's green energy industry?

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: I think it is our job to let people know that when the Leader of the Opposition makes his statement in his slim book or slick book or whatever he's calling it, he is killing jobs today in Ontario. We are meeting investors today whom he is having an impact on because he's telling them that that FIT rate will no longer be, that he's going to rip up contracts. We know that manufacturers who are busy making investments today need to know that there is a stable climate for investment—not what the opposition party or parties are offering.

This is important. These jobs matter. Is it the 230 affiliated with a northern community? Is it the thousands across the green industry jobs? The Leader of the Opposition is job-killing with his slim book, and it's our job to make sure people know about it. We cannot trust the opposition parties—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

ENERGY POLICIES

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: My question is to the Premier. You presented farmers as being supporters of your expensive energy experiments that are driving up hydro bills for Ontario families. In fact, you told this House, "Some of the strongest support we have for our wind turbine program comes from the Ontario Federation of Agriculture." You might have wanted to check with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture before you said that, because they've joined the push for a moratorium on wind turbines.

Will you apologize to the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the members of this assembly for saying something that simply is not true?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Energy.

Hon. Brad Duguid: It's obvious that the member didn't check with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. He's suggesting we check with them. Well, I did check with them. We spoke last night, indeed, to the president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. Once again, you didn't check your facts, and you're wrong.

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture's position has not changed; you're absolutely incorrect. I would suggest that the next time that you raise an issue like this that really misconstrues the position of another party, you have the courtesy to check with them first.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Premier McGuinty has said a lot of things to sell his—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Please continue.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Premier McGuinty has said a lot of things to sell his expensive energy experiments that play fast and loose with the facts. He said his subsidies would only add—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I don't need the assistance of any of the other armchair Speakers. I just ask the honourable member to withdraw that comment, please.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: He said his subsidies would only add 1% to hydro bills, but yesterday we learned that families will pay an extra \$310 a year for the next 20 years. He said families would save money with the smart meter tax machines. He said the Ontario Federation of Agriculture was a big supporter of his industrial wind turbines when Wayne Black of the OFA is saying he is 100% in favour of the moratorium.

Ontario needs change—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Minister?

Hon. Brad Duguid: [*Inaudible*] that the member opposite got up and asked a question today on the Green Energy Act because, indeed, I think the people in Tillsonburg are waiting very eagerly to hear where he stands. Does he stand with the McGuinty government creating 900 jobs in Tillsonburg? Does he stand with the mayor of Tillsonburg, who calls the program indeed—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I remind the honourable member from Oxford that you just asked the question, and you've been here long enough to understand the standing orders. If you're not satisfied, you can call for a late show.

Minister.

Hon. Brad Duguid: I guess my question is, does he stand with us in creating 900 jobs in Tillsonburg through the Siemens plant, through our Green Energy Act? Does

he stand with his own mayor in Tillsonburg, who feels very strongly about what this project is doing for Tillsonburg and, indeed, for farmers right across this province? Does he stand with the farmers who are benefiting from our microFIT programs, who are benefiting from our feed-in tariff? Or does he stand with his leader, who opposes all of that? People in Tillsonburg—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

INJURED WORKERS

Mr. Paul Miller: My question is to the Minister of Labour. At a time when employers have been paid \$2 billion in experience rating rebates and have had their premiums for WSIB coverage reduced by 27%, while at the same time injured workers' benefits have been cut by 20% compared to the cost of living, I've just received information that the WSIB's unbelievably aptly named "aggravation" policy is being differently interpreted and applied. This appears to be another attempt to address the unfunded liability on the backs of injured workers.

Can this minister explain what possible justification his WSIB has for launching this new attack on injured workers?

Hon. Charles Sousa: To all members of the House, today is a very important day. We have a number of injured workers on our front lawn telling us of some of the concerns and challenges they've faced over many years.

I've heard many stories personally. I've met with a number of organizations and individuals, and their stories are heart-wrenching. They look to us to commit to more dignity, more respect and fairness.

To members across the way, we recognize that more needs to be done, and indeed, more will be done. I'll add more in my supplementary.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Paul Miller: Workers who file a claim because of a workplace injury are suddenly found to have a pre-existing condition, like a degenerative disk, which they may not even have known existed. The alleged pre-existing condition may not have caused any problems until it was affected by workplace injury, but these injured workers are having their benefits and entitlements reduced because of the WSIB's reinterpretation of the aggravation policy.

Will this minister commit to fixing this hateful new attack on injured workers rather than just showing up for a photo op today at the annual Injured Workers' Day rally?

Hon. Charles Sousa: Let's compare what that side of the House has done in the past. It was the NDP that introduced the Friedland formula, the F-word, as made by the injured workers. The other side of the House introduced a modified Friedland formula, and what did that do over those 12 years? It increased a measly 2.9% of their costs.

Since we've come to power, we've increased and adjusted their benefits by almost 8%, and we will continue to support them. It is why we've introduced the Harry Arthurs review to ensure that we find a permanent replacement to the Friedland formula. We've introduced direct deposit to also assist those who are injured workers and require those funds.

But more importantly, in respect to those injured workers, they want us to do better in providing for prevention and protecting others who are working, and we will do our utmost to continue to do just that.

1120

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Ms. Leeanna Pendergast: My question is for the Minister of Research and Innovation. The Perimeter Institute in Waterloo region is holding their Equinox Summit beginning tonight, and next week. It brings leading researchers and scientists to Waterloo region. They'll be talking about clean technologies, drawing over 600 people. Tonight, Freeman Dyson will be speaking about quantum physics. It's a collaboration between the University of Waterloo and the Perimeter Institute; Mike Lazaridis and his work.

My question is this: What is the government doing to create high-quality jobs in clean energy technologies in Waterloo region, Kitchener-Conestoga and across the province?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: As you know, in our budget we committed an additional \$50 million to the Perimeter Institute, which is our second investment.

We believe that the research cluster in Kitchener-Waterloo is one of the leading clusters right now in the world. It has attracted, arguably, the best set of scientists. There will be, I think, some good news about that tonight.

It's unfortunate, though, because the Leader of the Opposition said he didn't believe our Premier. Well, I do believe our Premier. I also, unfortunately, believe the Leader of the Opposition, because one of our most critical policies has been the HST; some \$8.5 billion removed from these small-growth companies that are creating 50% of the jobs. I actually do believe that after two years of carping and complaining, the opposition party, if ever in power, would actually take that away and put \$8.5 billion worth of costs back into the economy.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Leeanna Pendergast: Thank you, Minister, for that. Definitely, supporting cutting-edge research is how we keep jobs in Ontario, and I'm proud that those many jobs are being created in Waterloo region thanks to this government's long-term vision and support.

Tonight I will be at the Perimeter Institute in Waterloo to recognize the great work of our researchers: advancements that will create jobs and prosperity in Ontario. My question for the minister is this: Will the minister affirm this government's commitment to moving Ontario forward through innovation by joining me and Minister

Milloy tonight at the Perimeter Institute? Will you be there, Minister?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: You know, we are so different, to my friend over there. The opposition party wants to massively subsidize and sole-source iPads. The opposition party wants to cancel the Green Energy Act and the green FIT program. This clean tech summit that I'm going to tonight—let's just go through this: That would damage 3,000 firms. It would undermine \$8 billion in investment. It would start to see an erosion of 65,000 jobs. This is the equivalent of cancelling the auto pact. And by the way, in the auto sector, you folks want to end the subsidies that we did on the auto sector. You want to tear apart the two largest, most successful sectors in Ontario. This is the equivalent of tearing apart—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Ms. Sylvia Jones: My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. As you know, the proposed application for a quarry in the township of Melancthon involves over 2,300 acres. This application is the largest in Ontario's history. Reviewing an application of this size and scope is going to take significant time and resources from your ministry. Minister, do you believe you have the staff and expertise available in MNR to review this proposed quarry application?

Hon. Linda Jeffrey: I'm pleased to answer the question again. I want to reassure the public, and especially the citizens of the township of Melancthon, that we're only at the beginning of the licence application process. In fact, it's my job as the Minister of Natural Resources—it's my responsibility—to ensure that all concerns, whether they're environmental concerns, health concerns or safety concerns, are addressed before any licence is issued. Let me make it clear: If these concerns are not addressed, no licence will be issued and no excavation shall commence.

I understand that there has been significant local concern expressed about this aggregate licence application. While I was not legally able to extend the objection period, I made it clear that I intended to consider comments outside the initial 45 days. As a result, I extended the comment period for the environmental registry. The additional 76 days will give the community a chance to provide their opinions—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Minister, I do appreciate the extension—I think that's an important part of the consultation process—but my question was very specific: Can you assure the residents in my riding that the Aggregate Resources Act will provide the same level of protection and scrutiny that an environmental assessment would?

Hon. Linda Jeffrey: I can tell you that I have been in contact with the member from Dufferin-Caledon and the Melancthon city council. I know they're concerned;

they've shared those concerns with me personally. I also spoke with Mayor Hill about this issue a number of weeks ago to let him know that my ministry was going to extend the EBR comment period.

Even before the application was submitted, I know that the proposed quarry was the subject of significant media attention. Residents are concerned about the preservation of agricultural land and the quarry's effect on the water table.

The Aggregate Resources Act has a process that gives the applicant up to two years—until March 2013—to have resolved any objections to the application. If there are still unresolved objections to the licence after that two-year period, the Ministry of Resources can refer the application to the Ontario Municipal Board.

We're still listening; we're still in that process where people can provide comments.

EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Premier. Some 300,000 well-paying manufacturing jobs have been lost in this province under this Premier's watch. In my hometown of Hamilton, 30% of the manufacturing jobs have been lost. For the past few years, Hamilton Jobs Action Centre has been doing an extraordinary job helping unemployed workers in the Hamilton area get back to work. But now the government has decided to shut down the centre by eliminating its funding on June 30.

My question is, will this government extend funding for this badly needed centre or will it once again turn its back on the workers of Hamilton?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Hon. John Milloy: We're very proud of the work that is done by Employment Ontario across the province in terms of supporting workers who have been laid off. Every year we invest over \$1 billion through Employment Ontario in a series of agencies across this province that offer job assistance to Ontarians who are facing layoff situations, who are looking to enter the workforce for the first time or who are looking to enter the workforce after an absence of many, many years.

Over the past number of years we have worked very closely with the sector, following the transfer of services from the federal government, to put together a transformation which would see that each community would have a number of providers able to offer a full range of services to anyone who is looking for a job. We have worked to focus on those individuals who are looking for a job and make sure that they have—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The centre has widespread support from across Hamilton. Representatives from the centre, from the United Way of Burlington and Greater Hamilton and workers who have benefited from the centre are actually here today. I introduced them at the

beginning of question period. A report just released praises the centre for the excellent work that it is doing with laid-off workers.

So I ask again, will the Premier commit right here and right now to extend funding past June 30 for the Hamilton Jobs Action Centre, or will this minister and this Premier stand by while the doors close on an organization that has provided assistance and hope to thousands of laid-off Hamiltonians?

Hon. John Milloy: I'd like to remind the member that unemployment was 9.9% in September 2009, during the period of the recession. The economy is turning the corner and in the community it is now down to 5.5%. Despite the fact that it's gone down, we are still anxious to make sure that people in the community of Hamilton have access to a full range of services. I want to give a list to the honourable member: the Hamilton Help Centre, Wesley Urban Ministries, the YMCA, Mohawk College, VPI—a variety of agencies within the community of Hamilton that are offering a full range of services.

We took a look at Employment Ontario and we took a look at it from the perspective of the individual who is looking for help, for a job. They need to go to a community centre which is going to offer them a full range—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

Mr. Dave Levac: My question is for the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Minister, the opposition put out a document on how they think they can actually govern the province. Farmers in my riding were astonished and puzzled that the Leader of the Opposition managed to fit in all of his Timbits for agriculture on less than one page.

1130

Inside of that mini bit on agriculture, I noted that they included risk management programs, but I thought our government had already taken care of that permanently in our last budget.

I'd like to ask the minister if that can be confirmed. Can you provide some clarity for my local farmers on exactly what the government is doing to support the farmers in my riding and those in Ontario?

Hon. Carol Mitchell: I do thank you for the question. If imitation is the highest form of flattery, then the slick book gives high praise to the McGuinty government. Unfortunately, I can say to you that if you're developing policy by looking in the rear-view mirror, it doesn't move Ontario forward. It doesn't move farmers forward. It doesn't move food processors forward, our producers, our retailers, our communities or our families.

In the list of the 229 risky promises, we have a gaping hole of \$10 billion. We've done our RMP, \$2 billion in income stabilization, and a very successful buy-Ontario plan. But I say to you, in order to predict the future, we look to the past.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Dave Levac: It's very clear to the constituents in my riding and those farmers across Ontario that we have come forward with a plan on risk management that they asked for and that they planned and organized. So I appreciate that. I know that you know that our farmers want and need that risk management at both levels of government, yet the federal government still refuses to participate in the program. It's a shame that the opposition has given up on the federal government supporting it. It's further an embarrassment that the opposition is taking credit for the risk management program. That's like the rooster taking credit for the sun rising.

I want to know from you, Minister, what are we going to do to continue to have the federal government support the risk management program that all the farmers in Ontario want?

Hon. Carol Mitchell: I really do believe that Bette Jean Crews, the president of the OFA, encapsulates the answer to that: Without support at the federal level, the remaining burden is left for the farmers.

We on this side of the House say, that's not acceptable. The programs were developed by farmers for farmers. At the table we have the federal government, the provincial government and the farmers. There's somebody missing from that table, and I ask the members from across the way, do you stand with Ontario farmers or do you stand with your federal cousins? The farmers know the answer to that and they recognize that by their risky slick book plan.

ENDANGERED SPECIES

Mr. John Yakabuski: To the Minister of Natural Resources: On May 10, your ministry posted an application for a permit under section 17 of the Endangered Species Act that would allow a wind turbine developer to "kill, harm and harass" two species at risk and destroy their habitat. When asked about this application, you responded, "For the most part, we can find ways to mitigate around endangered species reasonably."

I've never heard those words from you or your ministry when talking about the forestry industry. Every time they look for relief from the Endangered Species Act that was foisted upon them without consultation, the wall goes up. When will you start treating the forestry industry with the same kind of respect?

Hon. Linda Jeffrey: I'm pleased to answer a question on our Endangered Species Act. We know that we are the North American leader in species protection and recovery, and our government includes strong provisions to support the protection of habitat and species.

The Endangered Species Act contains a permitting system which balances the sustainable use of resources with the protection of threatened or endangered species. Recently, we introduced a five-month service guarantee for a permit because we realize there needs to be a

balance between economic development as well as protection. This five-month service guarantee will begin once a proponent has finalized a complete application with my ministry. It's going to eliminate the need for developers and landowners to be held up in their process. In fact, if they are removing trees, they're going to be—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. John Yakabuski: I've recently met with some forestry operators in my riding who told me that it has never been tougher to earn a living and operate in the province of Ontario.

Minister, your comments on this application suggest that you're treating it cavalierly and have two standards. When it comes to forestry operators, you don't consult or look to mitigate; you impose. In fact, you had promised to use the Crown Forest Sustainability Act when dealing with forestry and then you went back on your word. Why is it that you have two standards: one for developers trying to build unwanted wind turbines and another for the forest industry? Why do you continue to impose policies that are killing, harming and harassing good forestry jobs in this province?

Hon. Linda Jeffrey: I'm pleased to answer this question. Certainly, we acknowledge the work that the forestry sector has done to help conserve and protect species at risk in Ontario, but we don't need to take any lessons from the opposition. You have opposed any work that we've ever done to protect endangered species. You are not the protector of this sector. You've done nothing to be helpful. In fact, you have a reckless plan to jeopardize our economic recovery and take Ontario off track. You essentially have voted against endangered species protection at every turn, and you can give us no lessons on this front. We have worked very hard to get the Open for Business initiative to work on our regulatory burdens. We're proud of our record. We have a gold standard that's recognized across Canada and across Ontario. We're happy to work with our partners and we appreciate their support.

CELLPHONES

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est pour la ministre de la Promotion de la santé. Given that the World Health Organization has now classified electromagnetic fields from cellphones as a possible carcinogen—that is, that it could cause cancer—will the government require cellphone companies to put warnings on cellphones sold in Ontario?

Hon. Margaret R. Best: I thank the member for her question. First of all, let me assure you that our government continues to be committed to the health of Ontarians. We have worked diligently to address the dangers associated with cigarette smoking, unhealthy eating and inactivity.

We certainly welcome the World Health Organization's report. We will continue to review all evidence,

including this report, in consultation with our experts. Let me just say that the one thing that the member says—and I agree with what she says—is that they said there is “possible”—and I think that is a very key word for her to keep in mind. I continue to talk with our Chief Medical Officer of Health, Health Canada and all our experts in monitoring the new scientific evidence that has come to us.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

M^{me} France Gélinas: This is an issue that I have addressed with this minister before in a number of ways. In rejecting our call to inform Ontarians about the health risk of cellphones, the minister said, “Based on reviews of available scientific evidence by credible public health agencies such as the World Health Organization, the RF energy from cellphones has not been demonstrated to be causally linked to adverse health effects, including cancer.” That is what she said.

Now that the World Health Organization has linked cellphones to cancer and is calling for pragmatic measures to reduce exposure, won't the minister support the pragmatic measures by putting warning labels on cellphones, or will she do nothing at all to educate Ontarians about the possible health risks for cellphone use?

Hon. Margaret R. Best: Let me reiterate for the member, in case she didn't hear me the first time: We have worked diligently to address the dangers of cigarette smoking, unhealthy eating and inactivity. As the member said before, the World Health Organization has said that there is a possible, and I quote, “possible,” and I underline that—that is why we have experts that we speak to. I do not make decisions on my own without listening to the experts. What I will do, upon reviewing this evidence and talking with our Chief Medical Officer of Health and Health Canada, is that we will continue to monitor the new scientific evidence—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

MUNICIPALITIES

Mr. Jeff Leal: My question this morning is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Minister, in my riding of Peterborough, there has been a lot of discussion of the member from Niagara West—Glanbrook's schemes, tabled in a so-called slick book promise pamphlet. While the Ontario PC Party makes some mention of municipalities several times in the glorified PowerPoint presentation, they haven't made one solitary mention of the provincial-municipal service delivery review our government did a few years back.

This program reversed what was considered a tax nightmare on Ontario families. The downloading undertaken by the PC Party 10 years ago literally jacked up property taxes for seniors right across the province of Ontario. That party downloaded millions of dollars in extra costs on the tax base—and claimed it was revenue-neutral.

Minister, could you please explain to this House where the current government stands on the uploading of social services?

Hon. Rick Bartolucci: Let me make it abundantly clear to the member who asked the question, to you, Speaker, and to every municipality in the province of Ontario: We have made a commitment to protect the uploading which we've started in partnership, working together with our municipalities. Contrast that against the slick book promises, which simply say a lot of hot air, but not much in between.

In fact, the slick book is a slippery slope for municipalities. What it will cause is more downloading, higher taxes, less money for municipalities, more burden on municipalities and more burden on the taxpayers. On this side of the House, we're all about protecting services; on that side of the House, they're all about downloading services.

Interjections.

Hon. James J. Bradley: Extend question period.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'll honour that request.

VISITORS

Hon. Deborah Matthews: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'm sure that it is a point of order that there are other people in the gallery: James Berry, Meysa Maleki, Jason Lagerquist and Lauren Ramey are here with us today.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): No, that's not a point of order, but James just happening to be from St. Thomas—and I'm good friends with his mother—I'll allow it.

Lost and found time: a woman's earring.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): How's it look?

Well, I'll leave it with the Sergeant-at-Arms.

Hon. Sandra Pupatello: I think it's yours, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I've never had an earring.

DEFERRED VOTES

TIME ALLOCATION

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): We have a deferred vote on the motion for allocation of time on Bill 196, An Act to amend the Election Act with respect to certain electoral practices.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1143 to 1148.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Members please take their seats.

On May 31, Ms. Smith moved government notice of motion number 81. All those in favour will rise one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

Ayes

Aggelonitis, Sophia
Albanese, Laura
Arthurs, Wayne
Bartolucci, Rick
Bentley, Christopher
Berardinetti, Lorenzo
Best, Margaret
Bradley, James J.
Broten, Laurel C.
Brown, Michael A.
Brownell, Jim
Carroll, Aileen
Chiarelli, Bob
Colle, Mike
Crozier, Bruce
Delaney, Bob
Dickson, Joe
Dombrowsky, Leona
Duguid, Brad
Flynn, Kevin Daniel

Gerretsen, John
Gravelle, Michael
Hoskins, Eric
Hoy, Pat
Jaczek, Helena
Jeffrey, Linda
Johnson, Rick
Kular, Kuldip
Kwinter, Monte
Lalonde, Jean-Marc
Leal, Jeff
Levac, Dave
Matthews, Deborah
Mauro, Bill
McGuinty, Dalton
McMeekin, Ted
McNeely, Phil
Meilleur, Madeleine
Milloy, John
Mitchell, Carol

Murray, Glen R.
Oraziotti, David
Pendergast, Leeanna
Phillips, Gerry
Pupatello, Sandra
Ramal, Khaili
Ramsay, David
Rinaldi, Lou
Ruprecht, Tony
Sandals, Liz
Sergio, Mario
Smith, Monique
Sousa, Charles
Takhar, Harinder S.
Van Bommel, Maria
Wilkinson, John
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Zimmer, David

Barrett, Toby
Bartolucci, Rick
Bentley, Christopher
Berardinetti, Lorenzo
Best, Margaret
Bradley, James J.
Broten, Laurel C.
Brown, Michael A.
Brownell, Jim
Carroll, Aileen
Chiarelli, Bob
Chudleigh, Ted
Clark, Steve
Colle, Mike
Crozier, Bruce
Delaney, Bob
Dickson, Joe
Dombrowsky, Leona
Duguid, Brad
Elliott, Christine
Flynn, Kevin Daniel
Gerretsen, John
Gélinas, France

Jeffrey, Linda
Johnson, Rick
Jones, Sylvia
Klees, Frank
Kormos, Peter
Kular, Kuldip
Kwinter, Monte
Lalonde, Jean-Marc
Leal, Jeff
Levac, Dave
Marchese, Rosario
Martiniuk, Gerry
Matthews, Deborah
Mauro, Bill
McGuinty, Dalton
McMeekin, Ted
McNeely, Phil
Meilleur, Madeleine
Miller, Norm
Miller, Paul
Milloy, John
Mitchell, Carol
Munro, Julia

Prue, Michael
Pupatello, Sandra
Ramal, Khaili
Ramsay, David
Rinaldi, Lou
Ruprecht, Tony
Sandals, Liz
Savoline, Joyce
Sergio, Mario
Shurman, Peter
Smith, Monique
Sousa, Charles
Sterling, Norman W.
Takhar, Harinder S.
Van Bommel, Maria
Wilkinson, John
Wilson, Jim
Witmer, Elizabeth
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Yakubski, John
Zimmer, David

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Those opposed?**Nays**

Arnott, Ted
Bailey, Robert
Barrett, Toby
Chudleigh, Ted
Clark, Steve
Elliott, Christine
Gélinas, France
Hardeman, Ernie

Hillier, Randy
Jones, Sylvia
Klees, Frank
Kormos, Peter
Marchese, Rosario
Martiniuk, Gerry
Miller, Norm
Miller, Paul

Munro, Julia
Murdoch, Bill
Prue, Michael
Savoline, Joyce
Shurman, Peter
Wilson, Jim
Witmer, Elizabeth
Yakubski, John

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):
The ayes are 58; the nays are 24.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

SUPPORTING SMOKE-FREE ONTARIO
BY REDUCING CONTRABAND
TOBACCO ACT, 2011
LOI DE 2011 APPUYANT
LA STRATÉGIE ONTARIO SANS FUMÉE
PAR LA RÉDUCTION DU TABAC
DE CONTREBANDE

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of Bill 186, An Act to amend the Tobacco Tax Act / Projet de loi 186, Loi modifiant la Loi de la taxe sur le tabac.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1151 to 1152.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Members will please come to order.

Ms. Smith has moved third reading of Bill 186. All those in favour will rise one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

Ayes

Aggelonitis, Sophia
Albanese, Laura
Arnott, Ted
Arthurs, Wayne
Bailey, Robert

Gravelle, Michael
Hardeman, Ernie
Hoskins, Eric
Hoy, Pat
Jaczek, Helena

Murdoch, Bill
Murray, Glen R.
Oraziotti, David
Pendergast, Leeanna
Phillips, Gerry

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Those opposed?

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):

The ayes are 82; the nays are 0.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): There being no further deferred votes, this House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1155 to 1500.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Good afternoon. I would like the House to come to order. I want to thank the pages for giving me this wonderful little puppet with these Nike Chuck Taylor Converse.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Yes, I know it's a prop, but the Speaker can get away with it. Isn't that cute? Thanks to the pages. I really appreciate that.

ESTIMATES

Hon. Monique M. Smith: If I could ask my colleagues to rise, I have a message from the Honourable David C. Onley, the Lieutenant Governor, signed by his own hand.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The Lieutenant Governor transmits estimates of certain sums required for the services of the province for the year ending March 31, 2012, and recommends them to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, dated May 31, 2011, Toronto.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Laurel C. Broten: I have a number of guests to welcome: Peter Kiatipis, Esma Trejic and Esther Levy from the Ministry of Children and Youth Services; Will Falk, the co-chair of the adoption working group of the Expert Panel on Infertility and Adoption; Adam Diamond

and Jade Maitland, both from YouthCan; Emily MacKenzie Strowger, Sophia Kolaroff and Sheela Sharma from the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies; and Shanna Allen and James McGuirk from the Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth. They are all here today in anticipation of third reading debate of Bill 179. Welcome.

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel: I also have a number of people I'd like to introduce. I'd like to introduce Wayne and Clara Patterson, who are the parents of the late Paul Patterson, who was a paramedic; Laura Sanders, who was twin sister to Paul; Bruce Krauter, who is operations manager, Sun Parlour Emergency Services, Chatham-Kent; Tom Millard, Lambton EMS; Dwayne Purdy, Chatham-Kent EMS; Dave Desmarais, Essex-Kent EMS; Jim Sinclair, who is from Elgin-St. Thomas EMS; also Norm Gale, who is chief of EMS, Superior North Emergency Medical Services, and president of the Association of Municipal Emergency Medical Services of Ontario; Neal Roberts, who's the director of the EMS department in Middlesex; David Ralph, who's with the Toronto EMS; and last but not least, my own husband, René Van Bommel.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd like to take this opportunity to ask all members to join me as we welcome former member Ron Johnson, who represented Brantford in the 36th Parliament. Welcome back to the Legislature today.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): As we all know, since the last days of a session can be notoriously hectic and unpredictable around this place, I beg the indulgence of the House today to allow me—and I'd ask all members to join me—to thank the pages for their wonderful service to us here at the Legislature.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The Speaker will entertain a motion for unanimous consent.

LEGISLATIVE USHERS

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I also want to take this opportunity to thank the student ushers. They were particularly helpful last night. I'd ask all members to join me in congratulating the group of legislative student ushers who have performed their duties admirably and provided excellent service to this House: the team leader, Jordan Paolucci; Andrew Do; Claire Glossop; Teshini Harrison; Natalie Orellana; Janette Piasecki; Natasia Kalajdziovski; Maria Chung; Ryan Ko; Tracy Chen; Kristian Mandarano; Harlan Tufford; Natalija Micic; Osman Akhtar; Bedour Alagraa; Nader Mohamed; Wesley Parker; Madalina Sontrop; Tim Toong; and Cindy Yi. Some of these ushers will return for the next parliamentary session, while many are graduating and are going to be pursuing their careers or graduate studies. We wish all of them success.

Further introductions?

Mr. Dave Levac: We've already done Ron Johnson from Brant, a friend of mine?

Interjections.

Mr. Dave Levac: Oh, I see. I just wanted to make sure that it got covered off. Unfortunately, I was held up.

Interjection: Do you mean the former MPP?

Mr. Dave Levac: The former MPP for Brant.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

ATHLETIC THERAPY MONTH

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: I'm pleased to announce that June is Athletic Therapy Month. There are over 700 certified athletic therapists in Ontario who help to assist with and prevent musculoskeletal injuries and provide immediate care.

When attending or participating in an organized sports event, chances are an athletic therapist is on the sidelines to help if someone gets hurt. Athletic therapists are in our communities, helping Ontarians in their rehabilitation after an injury, post-surgery, or simply to help keep Ontarians active.

Canadian teams competing in international competitions such as the Olympics, the Pan Am Games and the Commonwealth Games will usually have at least one athletic therapist on staff to help ensure the well-being of our athletes.

I'm also pleased to announce that the athletic therapists' association of Ontario is holding its second annual golf tournament at Carlisle Golf and Country Club in my riding—or almost in my riding—on June 17. I look forward to participating. Part of the proceeds will go to the Canadian Paralympic Foundation to honour Dr. Robert Jackson, a strong and vocal supporter of athletic therapy and a pioneer in the field of sports medicine.

As Athletic Therapy Month commences, I would like to thank athletic therapists across Ontario for their support of our families and our athletes, and for helping to ensure that we live active and healthy lives.

INJURED WORKERS

Mr. Paul Miller: Today there is yet another Injured Workers' Day rally at Queen's Park. We should be celebrating a system that protects and supports all injured workers, not the system we have now that leaves them with broken homes, lost family, very reduced income, and often destitute and lonely.

Of that group, a significant number are women. This happens because non-covered areas such as office work, health care, social assistance and education are employment areas where women workers are a majority. The reason for excluding so many occupations traditionally associated with women is clear: false notions of men as breadwinners and the workplace as a man's world. All workers need compensation coverage now.

The Ontario Federation of Labour's position is that the continued failure of the government to correct this injustice cannot be justified or tolerated. The OFL also states that the long-term stability of the system depends on protecting the board's revenue base from shrinkage due to inadequate coverage, and that full coverage would increase the board's revenues by hundreds of millions of dollars per year, with a substantial portion available to enhance the board's reserves.

In short, extend full WSIB coverage to every Ontarian, ensuring all workers a minimum safety net; make the worker the focus of the system; and make the changes to the WSIB to become a workers' compensation system, not a refuse-at-first-sight insurance system.

ÉDUCATION POSTSECONDAIRE

M. Jean-Marc Lalonde: Samedi dernier, j'ai eu l'honneur de remplacer l'honorable Carol Mitchell, ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales, à la 29^e remise des diplômes au campus d'Alfred de l'Université de Guelph.

Parmi les dignitaires de marque présents : la D^{re} Renée Bergeron, directrice du campus d'Alfred; le D^r Robert Gordon, doyen du Collège agricole de l'Ontario, Université de Guelph; M^{me} Chantal Théorêt, directrice du campus de New Liskeard du Collège Boréal; et M^{me} Chan, du ministère de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation.

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Le campus d'Alfred est le seul établissement postsecondaire de langue française en Ontario oeuvrant dans le secteur agroalimentaire.

Soixante et onze étudiants ont reçu des diplômes : 18 étudiants en technologie agricole; 24 étudiants en techniques de soins vétérinaires du Collège Boréal; 12 étudiants en nutrition et salubrité des aliments; six étudiants ont reçu des certificats en études du système agroalimentaire canadien; cinq étudiants ont reçu des certificats aide en alimentation cuisinier étape 1, en partenariat avec le Centre d'apprentissage et de perfectionnement et le Centre d'éducation et de formation de l'Est ontarien. Douze ont reçu des certificats bureaucratiques en tenue de livres.

Au nom du campus d'Alfred, j'aimerais remercier le ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales et aussi le ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités pour leur appui continu.

JOSEPH BRANT MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Mrs. Joyce Savoline: I rise in the House today to make a statement regarding the pending proposal for the Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital in Burlington.

As all Burlingtonians know, the critical issue of our hospital redevelopment and expansion plan has been in limbo for far too long. Our hospital is still waiting for approval from the government for our proposed expansion and redevelopment project, at a cost of just over \$300 million for the first phase. Our hospital has not

had a major change to its physical footprint since 1970, leaving the hospital facing challenges on a daily basis. Regardless of the hurdles that the Joe Brant staff have to overcome each and every day, I am continuously amazed by the superior care that they provide. Now more than ever, Joe Brant needs a commitment from this government so that we can continue to care for our growing and aging population.

The needs of our community are unique. Burlington has a disproportionately high aging population with the number of seniors at 15.4%, significantly higher than the national average of 13.4%. This often results in a more complicated and higher level of care. In order to sustain the tremendous care our hospital's dedicated staff provides, we need proper resources and tools. It is imperative that Joseph Brant is included in the government's 10-year plan for infrastructure.

Burlington has been waiting patiently. It's our turn now.

VISITOR

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd ask all members to join me as we welcome David Turnbull, who represented York Mills in the 35th and 36th Parliaments and Don Valley West in the 37th Parliament, to the west members' gallery. Welcome back to the Legislature today, David.

ROADS BOARDS

Mr. Bill Mauro: Last week I was pleased to make a great announcement in Thunder Bay on behalf of the ratepayers and members of the local roads boards in northern Ontario. Effective April 1 of this year, our government is doubling the amount of funding roads boards receive annually to a 2-to-1 ratio. That means our government support for local roads boards will increase from \$12.5 million to \$25 million annually.

Roads boards in my riding, like Northern Light Lake, Kabaigon Bay, Shebandowan, Rossmere and so many others all the way to Atikokan, will benefit from this funding. The chairs, trustees and secretary-treasurers of these roads boards do great work with little acknowledgment. I'm very grateful that I've been able to announce this funding to help people like Bernie Roy, Billy Pilot, Tim Niitynen, Wayne Jacques, George Hystead and so many others. I want to thank them for all the hard work that they do.

The work they do maintaining these roads is essential for local residents, for school buses and emergency vehicles. It benefits more than their ratepayers, but also everyone else who uses these roads to fish, hunt, go blueberry picking or just take a ride in the country. Many are not permanent residents but seasonal campers who maintain residences in Thunder Bay and pay taxes to support those municipal roads.

This announcement reverses a decision made in the early 1990s that reduced provincial funding for roads

boards by 50%. Local roads boards like Lybster and Dawson-Goldie—and the list goes on—will now be better able to support this important road infrastructure.

ST. MARY CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL, BROCKVILLE

Mr. Steve Clark: I rise today to celebrate an incredible achievement by the staff and students of St. Mary Catholic High School in Brockville.

St. Mary is well known for its unbelievable fundraising and school spirit. But they've outdone themselves by raising a phenomenal \$30,000 for the Canadian Cancer Society last week.

Their first ever Relay for Life saw some 270 students, staff and residents walking from 6:30 Thursday evening to 6:30 Friday morning. Even the persistent rain couldn't wash the smiles off their faces as they circled the track throughout the night, each lap adding more to their remarkable total.

Although there was plenty of fun to keep them motivated, this was an extremely emotional event for the St. Mary community. The school has been hit hard by cancer, losing a great teacher, Mike Daoust, and a beloved 16-year-old student, Eric Latimer.

This was their chance to fight back by raising funds to support research that's making a real difference in the lives of those who are diagnosed with cancer.

I was moved to read the report in the local newspaper, especially the words from grade 11 student and organizing committee member Carly Scott. Carly lost her mother, Lorraine, to cancer three years ago, so I can imagine how bittersweet those 12 hours were for her.

I want to congratulate Carly for her courage and add my sincere thanks to the organizers and everyone who participated or made a donation.

It's an incredible debut, but if I know St. Mary, they will be sprinting past that \$30,000 mark at next year's Relay for Life.

LABATT BREWERIES

Mr. Khalil Ramal: I rise today to recognize a significant cultural donation being made in my community of London.

In 1847, John Kinder Labatt created what would become an internationally recognized brewery. At the same time, he began an historic collection that would eventually become one of the most significant and valuable archives in Canadian brewing history.

Today, these corporate and art collections, with an appraised value of over \$8.3 million, are being donated by Labatt Breweries of Canada to the University of Western Ontario and to Museum London.

The Labatt Material Cultural Collection includes original art, artifacts and memorabilia, including works by renowned artists A.J. Casson, Jean Paul Lemieux, Harold Town, Norval Morrisseau and many other talented artists.

The collection also includes some of the very first advertisements promoting responsible consumption of alcohol. Labatt's was a pioneer in this field.

This collection embodies nearly two centuries of community investment, environmental leadership and economic contribution to the province of Ontario. Through this donation, Labatt's legacy will now be publicly accessible, providing valuable insight into the economy and industrial and labour relations of the past 164 years.

With 3,000 employees across the country and facilities throughout the province of Ontario, Labatt's remains an important contributor to our economy.

I would ask all my colleagues to join me in thanking Labatt's for their contribution to the museum and the university, and also for preserving our history in the province of Ontario.

MEMBER'S FAREWELL

Mr. Ted McMeekin: A sign above my desk reads, "We stand on the brink of the unknown, which is to say, everything is normal and still permissive of joy."

No one in this place can predict the future with any degree of certainty. Sometimes life throws us a curveball. Such was the case three years ago when, to my surprise, I was diagnosed with prostate cancer. I tell you this because until that time I did not fully realize what a compassionate and even spiritual place this is.

Looking back, I will be forever grateful for the warmth, friendship and prayers offered for healing. By the way, my health has been restored and, thank God, I'm feeling great.

As we leave this place, I want to take a moment to thank you, Speaker Peters, for your friendship and consistent and visionary leadership.

And since this will be the last time I speak in this session, I want to express my appreciation for the incredible privilege of serving as an MPP.

This is a good place filled with good people doing exceptional work.

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Finally, I want to thank my constituency and Queen's Park staffs for their willingness to go the second mile. Bernadette Curtis, MaryAnne Quaglia, Amanda Hobbins and Lyndsay Caslick are exceptional public servants and need to be recognized as such. Thank you.

ITALIAN REPUBLIC DAY

Mr. Mario Sergio: Tomorrow is June 2, and Italians in Italy and all over the world are celebrating, joining in the 65th anniversary of Italian Republic Day.

Tomorrow, June 2, is also the Italian flag-raising on our grounds here at Queen's Park. Thanks to this wonderful, tolerant, open, accepting and free country that we live in, the community will come together in celebration, raising the flag. We have lots of entertainment, lots of food, and everyone is invited. The community does not

need any particular invitation to come and join in the celebration.

But this is only the beginning of a month full of celebration. We also celebrate, thanks to the work of the House and the approval of the House, the first June as Italian Heritage Month. On top of that, we are also celebrating the 150th anniversary of Italy's unification, so we have a lot to celebrate.

On top of that, as well, we have communities throughout Ontario raising the flag and celebrating not only the 150th anniversary, but the month of June as Italian Heritage Month. This is thanks to the members of the House, in recognition of the contribution that Italians have made to the economic and social growth of our province.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

GRAND JURIES ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 SUR LES GRANDS JURYS

Mr. Hillier moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 207, An Act to provide for grand juries in Ontario / Projet de loi 207, Loi prévoyant la constitution de grands jurys en Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member for a short statement.

Mr. Randy Hillier: This bill enacts the Grand Juries Act, 2011. Judges of the Superior Court of Justice are required to convene grand juries in every county and district. Grand juries serve one-year terms. The seven members of each grand jury are selected from the jury roll, in accordance with the Juries Act. Members may be excused from jury duty on grounds of illness and hardship. Members may also be excluded from jury duty if their service would or could present a conflict of interest.

Grand juries may review the activities of public institutions specified in subsection 3(1) of the act. A review is limited to the activities within a grand jury's county or district. Grand juries may solicit suggestions from the public about which institutions to review. Grand juries may enter the premises of institutions and may make inquiries of the institution's employees. Grand juries may appoint experts for assistance. Grand juries have the right of access to records that are in the institution's custody and care, unless the record falls within an exemption under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act or the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Grand juries are required to prepare reports in respect of their reviews. Reports must be filed as public documents and be made available for public inspection. Reports must also be tabled in the Legislative Assembly.

It is an offence to obstruct a review by a grand jury or any member of a grand jury, and penalties are specified in section 8 of the act.

WORKPLACE SAFETY AND INSURANCE AMENDMENT ACT (PERMANENT PARTIAL DISABILITY SUPPLEMENTS), 2011

LOI DE 2011 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA SÉCURITÉ PROFESSIONNELLE ET L'ASSURANCE CONTRE LES ACCIDENTS DU TRAVAIL (SUPPLÉMENT POUR INVALIDITÉ PARTIELLE À CARACTÈRE PERMANENT)

Mrs. Albanese moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 208, An Act to amend the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 respecting permanent partial disability supplements / Projet de loi 208, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur la sécurité professionnelle et l'assurance contre les accidents du travail en ce qui concerne le supplément pour invalidité partielle à caractère permanent.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member for a short statement.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: The bill amends section 110 of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 so that any pension a worker is eligible for under the Old Age Security Act does not reduce the worker's permanent partial disability benefits for pre-1985 and pre-1989 injuries under the pre-1997 act.

REDUCING AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE PREMIUMS BY ELIMINATING FRAUD ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 VISANT À RÉDUIRE LES PRIMES D'ASSURANCE- AUTOMOBILE PAR L'ÉLIMINATION DES ACTIVITÉS FRAUDULEUSES

Mrs. Mangat moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 209, An Act to encourage the disclosure of fraudulent activity in connection with automobile insurance claims / Projet de loi 209, Loi visant à encourager le dévoilement des activités frauduleuses en ce qui a trait aux demandes d'indemnités d'assurance-automobile.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member for a short statement.

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: Insurance companies estimate that about \$1.3 billion a year goes to cover insurance fraud in Ontario. This cost results in higher insurance premiums for Ontario drivers. This act, if passed, will constitute a proactive step towards reducing automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers.

WORKERS' DEATH BENEFITS PROTECTION ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 SUR LA PROTECTION DES PRESTATIONS DE DÉCÈS DES TRAVAILLEURS

Mr. Levac moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 210, An Act to amend the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 to protect benefits for spouses of deceased, retired workers / *Projet de loi 210, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur la sécurité professionnelle et l'assurance contre les accidents du travail afin de protéger les prestations versées aux conjoints des travailleurs retraités décédés.*

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Members will come to order. This is introduction of bills. We'll have an opportunity for debate later.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): You're so close to getting your gold star. You know that little happy face? You're almost there.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member for a short statement.

Mr. Dave Levac: It's a great bill.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): That's the way to introduce a bill. That's how a petition should be presented too.

PROTECTING CONTRACTORS THROUGH PROMPT PAYMENT ACT, 2011 LOI DE 2011 VISANT À PROTÉGER LES ENTREPRENEURS PAR DES PAIEMENTS RAPIDES

Mr. Levac moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 211, An Act to protect contractors by requiring prompt payment of construction contracts / *Projet de loi 211, Loi visant à protéger les entrepreneurs en exigeant le paiement rapide des contrats de construction.*

1530

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Brant.

Mr. Dave Levac: This is a fantastic bill.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

SENIORS' MONTH

Hon. Sophia Aggelonitis: Today, I rise to recognize the beginning of Seniors' Month in Ontario. Seniors' Month is a time to celebrate and honour seniors, their knowledge, experience and the contributions they make every day in communities right across our great province.

This year's theme is Live It Up, which highlights the benefits of active, engaging living at any age.

Earlier today, I was at Toronto city hall to formally kick off Seniors' Month. One of the keys to aging is to stay active and engaged. Seniors in our province are committed to active living, like taking tai chi classes, dance classes or even competing in the seniors' games.

The McGuinty government will continue to help seniors now and in the future. We took action to ensure that Ontario seniors have the support they need to lead active, safe and healthy lives.

We are the first government in Ontario's history to regulate retirement homes.

We have provided a new and enhanced tax benefit and credit system to make life a little easier for our seniors.

We are helping to combat elder abuse, and we offer programs to encourage active and engaged living.

Our government is helping seniors stay active in their communities in a number of ways. We support 273 elder persons' centres, which offer recreational and wellness programs. We help raise awareness across Ontario about the universal benefits of age-friendly communities.

We're also expanding the popular seniors' portal program that connects seniors in select communities to information about federal, provincial and local programs.

We have also partnered with Parks and Recreation Ontario to encourage municipalities to proclaim June as both Seniors' Month and Recreation and Parks Month in Ontario. This will be a great opportunity for Ontarians, and especially our seniors, to be active outdoors.

Many of us know first-hand the important role seniors play in our families and communities. They support their adult children, they help with grandchildren and they support their own aging parents.

Just as they support their families and build their communities, it is our responsibility as Ontarians to ensure that we do everything we can to help keep seniors more safe.

I am so proud that our government recently announced our commitment to develop the first Silver Advisory program in Canada. This program will establish a province-wide model to alert the public when vulnerable

seniors with Alzheimer's or other dementia go missing and may be in danger.

Also, for the first time in Ontario's history, seniors living in retirement homes will be protected under provincial legislation. The Retirement Homes Act will ensure that Ontario seniors live with dignity, respect and autonomy, and that they can make informed choices about their care options. Last month, I was pleased to announce several new measures to provide immediate protections for retirement home residents.

We're also working hard to help protect seniors from elder abuse. We have supported the Ontario Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse, which operates the important seniors' safety line, which is available in 154 languages, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Seniors' Month is a time to honour our seniors and to thank them for everything that they have done to help our province. I look forward to joining seniors across this province to celebrate their continued contributions.

We invite you to host or attend a Seniors' Month event and celebrate seniors in your community. A listing of Seniors' Month activities is available on the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat website at ontario.ca/seniorsmonth.

Thank you very much, and happy Seniors' Month.

PARAMEDICS

Hon. Eric Hoskins: Every day, Ontario's 7,000 paramedics respond to emergency calls in big cities and small towns in every corner of this province. Their quick and heroic actions to provide on-scene medical treatment literally save thousands of lives each and every year. They provide critical medical services en route to hospital, all while negotiating traffic and, in some cases, hazardous weather conditions.

Paramedics work in remote and difficult locations; in our homes and in our workplaces; in the service of others; to save lives and protect our families.

Ontario's paramedics perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation. They provide trauma care such as spinal and wound care. They administer drugs to treat conditions such as chest pain, hypoglycemia, allergic reactions, breathing difficulties and severe nausea and vomiting. And they do all of this and more while managing crises and interacting with patients, relatives and bystanders.

Paramedics are part of Ontario's triad of first responders, including the police and firefighters. Through their professionalism and dedication, they make Ontario a safer place to live.

Earlier today, I was proud to announce that our government is creating an award to honour paramedics who have performed an act of exceptional bravery by putting their own life at risk to protect the lives of others. The Ontario Award for Paramedic Bravery is to be presented to paramedics who have clearly demonstrated bravery in the course of their job or while off duty.

I would also like to commend my colleague MPP Maria Van Bommel, who has been a vigorous supporter of Ontario's paramedics. Her work in promoting the

bravery of Ontario's paramedics has brought this issue to the forefront. She has been instrumental in promoting the development of this bravery award for Ontario's paramedics.

MPP Van Bommel brought forward this issue with the support of the family of the late Paul Patterson, a paramedic who tragically died while in the line of duty. Today, Paul's parents, Wayne and Clara, and his twin sister, Laura, are here watching in the gallery.

Paul's brother, Jeff, is watching from home.

With them are Norm Gale, president of the Ontario emergency services association, together with a number of his paramedic colleagues and Bruce Krauter, operations manager of Sun Parlour EMS.

As a physician, I can tell you from a personal point of view that Ontario's paramedics are a vital part of our medical system. Throughout my career, I have witnessed the exceptional work that our paramedics do on the front lines while keeping our communities healthy and safe, and I have witnessed the way our paramedics confront emergencies with professionalism, compassion and courage. They go above and beyond every day and night in this province to save lives and protect Ontario's families.

The Ontario Award for Paramedic Bravery will recognize those paramedics whose extraordinary courage brings honour to their profession and to all of us.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Responses?

1540

SENIORS' MONTH

Mr. Gerry Martiniuk: It is with much pride that I rise today to pay tribute to the senior citizens of our province on behalf of Tim Hudak and the PC caucus. I personally will celebrate Seniors' Month in my riding on Friday, when I host my annual seniors' education day with hundreds of my seniors. This event is popular with the seniors of Cambridge and North Dumfries, as it provides them with important information and helps them to improve their health and well-being and maintain their independence to remain living in the homes they worked so hard to build.

Our seniors deserve our respect and our thanks for the freedom and prosperity we enjoy. Like many young families, however, the seniors of our province are struggling to make ends meet. Electricity rates are not affordable and taxation levels are out of control. Our seniors have many needs that I fear are not being met by this government—a government that is willing to provide a \$3.5-billion top-up of an already-rich GM pension plan, at a time when 70% of our seniors get no pension at all.

Recently, a Cambridge senior wrote an open letter to me in the Cambridge Times, describing the financial stress she had experienced when forced to pay \$4,000 for dental work. She wrote: "When I receive my billing from the dentist, my credit card will be maxed out and I'll be back in debt."

The cost of dental care or lack thereof for those who cannot afford it worries me greatly. It is important to me that the needs of our seniors be met today and in the future. One of those needs is long-term-care beds for those in need. This government has frozen construction of new long-term-care beds for eight years, leaving seniors living in hospitals or, worse still, without help of any kind as there are no vacant beds. This is unacceptable.

I say that we owe it to our seniors to live their final years with dignity, comfort and respect.

PARAMEDICS

Mr. Steve Clark: It's truly an honour to rise today on behalf of the Ontario PC caucus and our leader, Tim Hudak, to acknowledge the valour of Ontario's paramedics. This provincial bravery award is long-overdue recognition for the remarkable courage displayed every day by the men and women in our emergency medical services. For too long, Ontario's paramedics have had to wonder why, unlike their peers in firefighting and policing, they didn't have an honour of their own to recognize acts of heroism on the job. This award will finally do that. It will celebrate those extraordinary acts of heroism where a paramedic goes above and beyond the call of duty.

I think it's very important, when we're talking about bravery and paramedics, to understand that the very act of putting the uniform on every day takes incredible courage, because a paramedic never knows what crisis the next call will bring. Remember, they're often the first emergency personnel who arrive at a traffic accident, house fire or even a crime scene. Of course, none of us ever wants to be involved in an incident that has an ambulance speeding to our aid, but we all feel safer in society knowing that our paramedics, just like our police officers and firefighters, are ready to put their own lives on the line to protect us and our loved ones.

In my riding, the dedicated men and women watching out for our safety are the 110 paramedics with the Leeds Grenville Emergency Medical Services. Last year, they responded to more than 18,000 calls, including 9,240 emergencies from ambulance bases in Brockville, Prescott, Spencerville, Kemptonville, Elgin and Gananoque.

I want to thank Chris Lloyd, the deputy chief of the Leeds Grenville EMS, who mentioned a couple of acts of heroism in my own riding. Graeme Marchand is a paramedic who jumped into the chilly waters of the St. Lawrence a few years ago to help rescue four people after a vehicle collision. Deputy Chief Lloyd also mentioned Joel Deschene, a paramedic from Kemptonville who, on his day off, stopped to rescue a person trapped inside a burning vehicle from certain death.

Fortunately, Graeme and Joel and the people they saved all lived to talk about their experiences. But sadly, we know that there are too many paramedics who lose their lives in the line of duty. Indeed, it is estimated that one paramedic dies on the job every year in Canada. It's

those men and women who have sacrificed their lives in the service of others that I think we should all think about today.

To paramedics in my riding of Leeds–Grenville and throughout Ontario, I want to thank you for your service, and I'm proud that the province has at last created a bravery award that you can call your own.

SENIORS' MONTH

Mr. Paul Miller: Every year, we celebrate our seniors in the month of June. But this year, having reached the youthful age of 60, it's a little closer to my heart.

Although it's sad that on a day when we recognize the month to celebrate all that our seniors have brought to us as individuals and to our communities, the minister and her government have still refused to take the simple action of passing Bill 92, which would mandate automatic sprinkler systems—basic fire safety—for our most vulnerable seniors who live in retirement homes.

The government also failed its seniors in its new retirement home bill, which does not include automatic sprinklers and which leaves too much control with the retirement home operators and not enough with the affected, vulnerable seniors and their families. This is especially crucial when this bill leads to much more personal care, like that provided in long-term-care homes.

Next week, we're holding our second annual seniors' fair in Hamilton East–Stoney Creek. It was extremely well attended last year, providing information booths for 22 community, government and NGO organizations. Those who attended the fair found it to be very educational, providing a great venue to meet with friends, neighbours and to meet new seniors. We enjoyed a light lunch, Peruvian music and great company. This year's event looks to be every bit as good.

As I often do in my newsletters, calendar or monthly op-ed column, I encourage any of us who are still fortunate enough to have their senior families still with them to take the time to learn what it was like growing up with the daily changes to technology, education, communities and families.

Their stories should be passed down from generation to generation. They should be welcomed to all of our family events, and seniors should be thanked for everything that they've been through that has made our lives as good as they are today.

I encourage everyone to give the gift of a smile to a senior, whether you know them or not. It's a very simple and easy thing to do, but something that brings a bit of cheer to them.

To all seniors, I thank you for all that you've done, and I encourage you to keep up the example that you've been to all of us by living actively and living well.

PARAMEDICS

M^{me} France Gélinas: I'm very happy to be talking today about the excellent work that the 7,000 paramedics

do right here in Ontario day in and day out, and to support the new award for paramedic bravery. Doesn't that have a nice ring to it? Paramedic bravery. I like it.

Paramedics are first responders. They are often the first ones on the scene when someone falls ill, is injured or otherwise traumatized. They are there to provide medical attention and deal with crises. Whether we talk about sudden infant death, drowning, motor vehicle accidents, falls, vital sign absence—the list goes on—it is the paramedics who assess and begin treatment for the patient at the scene; who care for and treat the patient en route to hospital and who are responsible for the continuation of that care until the responsibility is transferred to the receiving hospital.

The question that must be asked of ourselves: Are we, as MPPs and as a collective, as the government, doing everything we should be doing to support Ontario's hard-working paramedics in their day-to-day lives, to assist them in carrying out their jobs to serve the people of this province, to serve us? The NDP has been working to do just that.

On March 23, 2010, the MPP from Parkdale-High Park, one of my colleagues, introduced Bill 11, An Act to amend the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 with respect to post-traumatic stress disorder. The bill would finally recognize the stresses faced on a daily basis by paramedics. It would recognize the positive contributions their work makes to the lives and well-being of citizens of this province, and it would recognize the burden that paramedics face as they witness the pain and the injuries of traumatized Ontarians.

We know that first responders face levels of post-traumatic stress disorder much more than anybody else. It is an emotional illness that usually develops as a result of terribly frightening, life-threatening or otherwise highly unsafe experiences. Left untreated, PTSD can have devastating, far-reaching consequences for the sufferer's medical and emotional functioning, especially in their relationships with their family and with society.

1550

We know it is the nature of the paramedic profession that exposes workers to traumatic and life-threatening events.

I look forward to celebrating the first award for paramedic bravery.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Congratulations to paramedics, and in particular those from Elgin and Middlesex county, whom I represent. Thank you for coming to Queen's Park today.

PETITIONS

POWER PLANT

Mr. John Yakabuski: I have a petition signed by hundreds, maybe thousands, of people with respect to the Petawawa River and a proposed power development.

"To the Ontario Legislative Assembly:

"Please take appropriate action to ensure that the development of a power generation project at Big Eddy (site 2KB21) is stopped. I object to this development because:

"1. The project would have a severe impact on the migration of fish, including some species at risk between the Ottawa River and Algonquin Park.

"2. The project would destroy one of the premier urban kayaking locations in North America.

"3. The project represents a public safety hazard to users of the park area a few hundred metres downstream of the powerhouse.

"4. The project would have a major, negative aesthetic impact on a stretch of the river right in the middle of the town of Petawawa.

"5. The Petawawa River is the only significant, free-flowing tributary of the Ottawa River in Ontario; and

"6. The proponent of this project is not fulfilling his obligation under the class environmental assessment process to ensure open and transparent public communication and to ensure that public concerns are reflected in the design of the project."

I table this petition and hand it to Hamza. It may be your last petition.

DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF NIAGARA

Mr. Peter Kormos: I have a petition, and I wish people would put their BlackBerrys away so they could hear what the petition says because it's important.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas special education for the District School Board of Niagara has been historically underfunded, we would like the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to allocate funding to the District School Board of Niagara for high-needs special education comparable to the provincial average, \$508.69;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The District School Board of Niagara currently has a shortfall in funding for special education of approximately \$5 million per year. School councils across our school board have started this petition to be presented to Jim Bradley, MPP, and sent to the Minister of Education Leona Dombrowsky.

"The District School Board of Niagara has the second-lowest funding for special education in the province. This issue not only impacts students with special needs but all students and educators within our board.

"Please add your name to this petition to support having an immediate review and correction of the funding we receive for special education."

This has been certified by the Clerk and has been appropriately signed by me. I endorse its message, and it contains literally thousands of signatures.

CELLULAR TOWERS

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: I've got a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that reads as follows:

"Whereas a cellular communications tower is proposed to be built in the vicinity of Third Line and Rebecca Street in Oakville;

"Whereas Industry Canada has ultimate authority to approve the location of cellular communications towers under the federal Radiocommunication Act;

"Whereas the province of Ontario has no jurisdiction in the placement of cell towers;

"Whereas the town of Oakville has very limited jurisdiction in the placement of cell towers; and

"Whereas many area residents and local elected officials have expressed concerns with the proposed location and proximity to residential areas;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the province of Ontario request that the government of Canada grant municipalities the right to have enhanced participation in the placement of cellular communications towers in residential areas; and

"That the province of Ontario request that the government of Canada place a moratorium on the construction of cellular towers within 500 metres of residential homes until the implementation of an improved municipal approval process."

I agree with this, will sign it and send it down with Maggy.

ENVIRONMENTAL REGISTRY

Mr. Steve Clark: I'd like to thank Laurie Scott from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock for providing me with a petition with over a thousand signatures collected by Sharon Stewart from Kirkfield.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the farmers and landowners' request for the intervention or action that the Legislative Assembly is being asked to make, or to refrain from making, a decision regarding the Ontario environmental registry EBR number 011-2901 being implemented the comment period, April 15, 2011, to May 16, 2011, for public consultation and comments this information was recently brought to our attention, May 4, 2011. Further, we oppose the restrictions that would be placed on the farmers and landowners after the three-year grace period. This, in our opinion, would drastically affect the food chain.

"I/we, the farmers and landowners, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly:

"The McGuinty government must immediately pass legislation to protect the rights and freedoms of the farmers and landowners of this province as the effects are from the estimated 10,000 to 30,000 farmers and rural landowners quoted in the Ontario Environmental Registry."

I'll affix my signature and send it to the table with page Erica.

FRENCH-LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Mr. Michael Prue: I have a petition that reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees access to a publicly funded French-language education; and

"Whereas the Ontario government acknowledged in February 2007 that there is an important shortage of French-language schools in all of Toronto, and French students have been prevented from having the same opportunities as their English counterparts, and provided funds to the French-language school boards so that they might build new or purchase existing schools deemed to be designated as 'surplus' from other school boards; and

"Whereas the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) inherited and still owns the bulk of school buildings and land deemed for educational use in Toronto; and

"Whereas many TDSB schools are not operating at ministerial capacity, and yet the majority of those schools are not being offered for sale to other school boards, and when they are, only a parcel of the premise is put up for sale as opposed to the entire school, thus ensuring that the French school boards must decline the offer to purchase and freeing the way for the TDSB to maximize the revenues for the benefit of TDSB alone; and

"Whereas this practice has been going on for many years and the Minister of Education continues to approve the sale of those parcelled pieces of school property knowing that the French school boards are desperate to find schools to purchase and knowing that many of the TDSB's schools are underutilized; and

"Whereas despite the urgent need and despite having the funds, the children from Toronto East, French Catholic school board, have waited for years and continue to wait for the addition of an elementary and a secondary school in their district, and see no indication of the political will to solve this impasse in the near future;

"We, the undersigned members and supporters of the francophone and francophile community of greater Toronto, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Minister of Education stop approving the lease or sale of parcelled pieces of school premises by the TDSB, as allowing this clearly goes against the spirit of the Education Act and its regulations (in particular Reg 444/98) by failing to allow school premises (that were given to the TDSB) to continue to benefit the students of Ontario, which includes French-language students."

Interjections.

Mr. Michael Prue: I am in agreement. I would sign my name to it—and it's been approved by the Clerk, despite the howls.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I would say to the honourable members that there is nothing contained in

the standing orders regarding the length of a petition. That petition is about two-and-a-half minutes long; I timed it yesterday.

You know what? If you listened, if you were here in the House last night and you heard some comments that I made, I think that this would be a very appropriate issue to send to the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly, to take a look at petitions and a wide variety of other issues in here.

The honourable member is certainly within his right to present that petition. He has guests here who he is presenting that petition on behalf of, and the interjections certainly are unhelpful to the member and are unhelpful to the guests whom he's presenting the petition on behalf of. Those of you who are here after October 6, I would encourage you to take a hard look at a number of things within this House, including petitions.

Mr. John Yakabuski: On a point of order, Speaker: I recognize the member's right, and I'm not presupposing what the situation is, but I know there are members who are here who are hoping to get petitions in prior to the end of the legislative session. If there are petitions that do need to be tabled today, I would ask for unanimous consent that we could extend the period of petitions if there are members who have petitions that have not been tabled before and are looking to get them in today.

1600

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Agreed? I heard a no.

Mr. Peter Kormos: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: To that issue, and I don't want to intrude on the limited period of time for petitions, but we should recall that the 15-minute time frame for petitions in the standing orders was driven by one former member Mike Harris, who used petitions to create a dilatory intervention in the process of orders of the day. It's unfortunate that that sledgehammer was applied to deal with what was a very specific and unique problem perceived at the time.

Perhaps there could be some more creativity—first of all, members should know that they can table petitions at any time with the clerks' table, and the petition will require a response just as if it were read into the record. Secondly, of course, the standing orders indicate that you can read a summary or a précis of the plea, rather than reading the whole petition.

But I am, with respect, loath to succumb to a suggestion that the historic, centuries-old tradition of petitioning the Parliament be interfered with any more than it already has.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): We will continue.

ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PROGRAM

Mr. Khalil Ramal: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas in January 2009, Health Canada approved the medication Soliris on a priority basis for patients with paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria (PNH); and

"Whereas PNH is an ultra-rare, progressive and life-threatening blood disorder for which there were no therapeutic options until Soliris; and

"Whereas Soliris is the first and only proven effective treatment for PNH, significantly benefiting patients around the world;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To urge the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to immediately provide Soliris as a life-saving treatment option to patients with PNH in Ontario through public funding."

I agree with this petition and give it to Jonathan to take to the table.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound

CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Mr. Bill Murdoch: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This will probably be my last chance to speak in the House before you, and I appreciate all you have done for us.

It's a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to save our jails. I'll leave the "whereases" out and go right to the bottom so we all have time:

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Premier McGuinty supports the Owen Sound and Walkerton jails remaining open until such time as a new regional corrections facility can be opened."

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've enjoyed my time here.

REPLACEMENT WORKERS

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have 2,000 postcards coming from all over:

"Labour laws in Ontario are failing to protect workers' rights to free and fair collective bargaining. The growing practice of contracting replacement workers is creating longer strikes and lockouts. This imbalance means there is no incentive for companies to negotiate to end these disputes. Ontario communities and families are suffering and basic rights are being denied.

"Collective bargaining created an economic middle class that is disappearing along with workers' rights. It is time to bring balance back to the process.

"Stand up for all Ontarians." Reform labour law and "ban replacement workers."

I support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask Caleb to bring it to the table.

IDENTITY THEFT

Mr. Tony Ruprecht: I will provide you with the condensed version of this petition, which I have received from Consumer Federation Canada. It reads as follows:

The recommendation is therefore: "(1) All consumer reports should be provided in a truncated (masked-out) form....

“(2) Should a consumer reporting agency discover that there has been an unlawful disclosure of consumer information, the agency should immediately inform the affected consumer.

“(3) The consumer reporting agency shall only report credit-inquiry records resulting from actual applications for credit....

“(4) The consumer reporting agency shall investigate disputed information within 30 days and correct, supplement or automatically delete any information found unconfirmed, incomplete or inaccurate.”

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I provide this for you.

DOG OWNERSHIP

Mrs. Julia Munro: I just want to do the petition itself:

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To repeal the breed-specific sections of the Dog Owners’ Liability Act (2005) and any related acts, and instead implement legislation that encourages responsible ownership of all dog breeds and types.”

I’m in complete agreement with this.

DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

M^{me} France Gélinas: It wouldn’t feel right if I didn’t present this petition. I’ve been presenting it every day since September 2009.

“Whereas ... Ontario ... is making” PET scanning “a publicly insured health service available to cancer and cardiac patients ... ; and

“Whereas” since 2009, “insured PET scans” are being performed “in Ottawa, London, Toronto, Hamilton and Thunder Bay; and

“Whereas the city of Greater Sudbury is a hub for health care in northeastern Ontario ... ;

“We ... petition the Legislative Assembly ... to make PET scans available through the Sudbury Regional Hospital, thereby serving and providing equitable access to the citizens of northeastern Ontario.”

I support this petition and will ask Amira to bring it to the Clerk.

SICKLE CELL AND THALASSEMIC DISORDERS

Mr. Mike Colle: I have a petition in support of Bill 165 to do good things to end sickle cell and thalassemia in Ontario.

“Whereas sickle cell and thalassemic disorders are chronic genetic diseases that can cause progressive organ dysfunction...;

“Whereas an estimated 5% of” Ontario’s “population are carriers of ... sickle cell ... disorders;

“Whereas Ontario is home to over 75% of Canadians living with sickle cell disorder and the large majority of Canadians” who suffer from this disease;

“Whereas Ontario already has Canada’s only newborn screening program for sickle cell” and Sick Kids hospital treats sickle cell;

“Whereas greater public awareness of these diseases and the benefits of genetic testing are needed in ... Ontario;

“We, the undersigned, support” Bill 165, MPP Mike Colle’s bill, to fund sickle cell and thalassemic care in Ontario.

ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PROGRAM

Mrs. Christine Elliott: A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas in January 2009, Health Canada approved the medication Soliris on a priority basis for patients with paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria (PNH); and

“Whereas PNH is an ultra-rare, progressive and life-threatening blood disorder for which there were no therapeutic options until Soliris; and

“Whereas Soliris is the first and only proven effective treatment for PNH, significantly benefiting patients around the world;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To urge the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to immediately provide Soliris as a life-saving treatment option to patients with PNH in Ontario through public funding.”

I agree with this completely. I’m pleased to sign my name and send it to the table.

TAXATION

Mr. Paul Miller: Here’s a short one for you to make you all happy:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Be it resolved that Dalton McGuinty take the unfair HST off of hydro and home heating bills.”

I affix my name to this. I agree with it.

CEMETERIES

Mr. Jim Brownell: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“The government must pass Bill 126, An Act to protect Ontario’s inactive cemeteries, 2010, to prohibit the relocation of inactive cemeteries in the province of Ontario.”

I agree with this, shall sign it and send it to the clerks’ table.

OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

M^{me} France Gélinas: “Whereas serious systemic problems have continued year after year in nursing homes under the governance of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care; there is no confidence in the ministry to provide effective oversight over nursing homes to ensure all residents are kept safe from harm and receive proper care;

“We, the undersigned Ontarians, therefore request legislative change to grant the Office of the Ombudsman of Ontario to have oversight authority over Ontario nursing homes...”

I'll ask Jonathan to bring it to the Clerk.

CARTE D'IDENTIFICATION

M. Phil McNeely: Une pétition à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario:

« Attendu que plusieurs aînés, personnes avec déficience visuelle, et personnes n'ayant ou ne voulant pas de permis de conduire; et

« Attendu que plusieurs transactions journalières telles encaissement de chèques personnels; ouverture de compte bancaire dans une institution financière; retour de marchandises dans un commerce de détails; embarquement pour un vol domestique; preuve d'âge légal pour avoir accès aux casinos, clubs et bars; enregistrement à un hôtel; demande d'obtention de carte de crédit, et aussi pour la location de vidéo qui nécessite une preuve d'identité avec photo issue par le gouvernement;

« Nous, soussignés, adressons à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario la pétition suivante :

« Que le gouvernement de l'Ontario développe une carte d'identification avec photo, et émette, en 2011, une carte d'identification photo autorisée par l'Ontario aux résidents de la province âgés de plus de 16 ans qui ne conduisent pas ou choisissent de ne pas conduire. »

Je supporte cette pétition et y appose ma signature.

1610

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I move that the order for second and third reading of the following private bill shall be called consecutively and the question on the motions for second and third reading of the bill be put immediately without debate: Bill Pr48, An Act to revive 917866 Ontario Inc.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Agreed? Agreed.
Motion agreed to.

917866 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2011

Mrs. Elliott moved second reading of the following bill:
Bill Pr48, An Act to revive 917866 Ontario Inc.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

917866 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2011

Mrs. Elliott moved third reading of the following bill:
Bill Pr48, An Act to revive 917866 Ontario Inc.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

BUILDING FAMILIES AND SUPPORTING
YOUTH TO BE SUCCESSFUL ACT, 2011LOI DE 2011 FAVORISANT
LA FONDATION DE FAMILLES
ET LA RÉUSSITE CHEZ LES JEUNES

Ms. Broten moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 179, An Act to amend the Child and Family Services Act respecting adoption and the provision of care and maintenance / Projet de loi 179, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services à l'enfance et à la famille en ce qui concerne l'adoption et les soins et l'entretien.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Debate?

Hon. Laurel C. Broten: I'll be sharing my time with the member from Eglinton–Lawrence.

As this 39th Parliament moves toward its conclusion, I feel so privileged to serve in this House, to represent the community of Etobicoke–Lakeshore and to serve as Minister of Children and Youth Services and minister responsible for women's issues, and I could not be more pleased to rise today for the third reading debate on the Building Families and Supporting Youth to be Successful Act, 2011.

Je suis ravie aujourd'hui de prendre la parole à l'occasion du débat en troisième lecture de la Loi de 2011 favorisant la fondation de familles et la réussite chez les jeunes.

This important legislation is the next step in our government's improvements to Ontario's adoption system. If passed, it will provide thousands more kids with the opportunity to live happy lives with stable, loving permanent families.

The proposed legislation, if passed, will also help build a brighter future for Ontario's youth, allowing young people whose care arrangement ended at age 16 or 17 to return to their children's aid society to receive supports up until the age of 21.

Why do we need these changes? We need these changes because, of the 9,000 crown wards in the care of children's aid societies, 7,000 have access orders that prevent them from being eligible for adoption, and this needs to change. It needs to change because we know that kids who are adopted or provided with the permanency of a long-term home have significantly better out-

comes compared to those who are not. They are more likely to complete high school and continue school at the post-secondary level.

We also know that there are so many prospective adoptive parents in Ontario who want to bring a child into their lives to love and support. With this in mind, we can and we must make it is easier to bring children waiting to be adopted and prospective parents together. Bill 179 does just that by removing a huge barrier to the placement of so many crown wards for adoption. This critical change will make a difference for thousands of kids in Ontario who want to find their forever family.

Bill 179 has so many fingerprints on it, and I want to thank the Expert Panel on Infertility and Adoption for the thorough and thoughtful recommendations they provided our government. Their work presented vital insights on the barriers that kids and prospective parents can face when they set out to build a family.

I want to thank our front-line workers, experts and those who care about finding forever families for Ontario's kids. All of their collective insight and advice has culminated in the bill before us today.

In developing this legislation, we wanted to find a balance for all parties involved while keeping in mind one goal: our drive to find permanent homes for waiting kids. The proposed legislation is child-focused. It allows for a child to continue to have a beneficial contact with his or her birth family and other significant people in his or her life after being placed for adoption, while still respecting the expectations of prospective adoptive parents. The proposed legislation strikes the right balance because it is focused on what is best for the child.

The second and equally important highlight of Bill 179 is the extended support it will provide to older crown wards. While we take steps to support children's aid societies to secure permanent homes for every child in the province's care, we know that for some kids, adoption will not be in their future, but we, as their parents, want to ensure an easier transition to adult life and to a life full of potential. Currently, a youth whose CAS care or customary care is terminated at age 16 or 17 is not allowed to come back for the support he or she may need and want. This makes these young people at risk of falling through the cracks. That is why Bill 179 proposes changes that would allow youth whose care arrangement ended at age 16 or 17 to return to their CAS and receive supports until age 21, opening the door for these young people to get the supports they need to succeed.

During committee hearings, we heard from a number of people, including the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies and former crown wards, that a greater safety net was needed for this vulnerable youth population. Former crown wards, in particular, spoke passionately and eloquently about the importance of helping all youth ages 16 to 20 to re-engage with their CAS to receive supports.

I'm pleased to say that we listened and we're responding to their concerns. Our strengthened legislation, if

passed, would allow these young people to voluntarily return to their CAS to receive financial and non-financial supports until age 21, no matter what. This is the right thing to do. This continued support will help these young people achieve better educational outcomes and help them become successful adults.

Given the importance and impact of this bill, I am pleased that the Standing Committee on Social Policy has reviewed our legislation thoroughly and carefully. I want to thank all of the individuals and organizations that put forward thoughtful and often passionate comments and recommendations. We know there is still more work to do. We are continuing to work on the development of targeted subsidies. We need to get this right. We will work with our CASs over the next few weeks to continue to learn more about the best ways of implementing subsidies so that more children find permanent homes. We will seek their advice and that of other experts and consider how we can best build on the experiences across the province in a fiscally neutral way.

Lastly, building upon the work undertaken during our province's first-ever aboriginal child welfare summit in Fort William First Nation and the good work being done by my aboriginal adviser John Beaucage, our government is committed to building stronger relationships with aboriginal communities, organizations and governments, and to improving the quality of life for aboriginal kids on- and off-reserve. We know it is critically important for aboriginal children and youth to remain connected to their communities, cultures and traditions. That is why, as part of the package of recently announced reforms, we are working with CASs and First Nations to encourage more frequent use of customary care arrangements, and we look forward to continuing this very important work.

I have received many letters of support over the last few weeks, and I am humbled that Ontarians share our province's vision for Ontario's kids. One prospective adoptive mom wrote, "Thank you, on behalf of all of us adoptive parents and all those children who don't have a voice." A mentor to a former crown ward wrote, "Thank you. How much better the lives of many children would be with stable families who could give them security and help them rebuild trust in people."

This is incredibly encouraging, but the greatest encouragement I take comes in knowing that the young people who stand to benefit the most have thanked us for the important steps we're taking. They have told us that every kid in Ontario deserves a family and that nothing compares to the love and support that a permanent family can provide. This legislation is an important accomplishment, one that all of us in this chamber can be proud of, one that will improve and enrich the lives of thousands of kids and families. I am reminded of something author Elizabeth Stone once said. She said that to become a parent "is to decide forever to have your heart go walking around outside your body."

I call on all members to support this important legislation so that prospective parents across the province can experience that same feeling and that thousands of

waiting kids can realize their dream of finding their forever family.

1620

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): The member for Eglinton–Lawrence.

Mr. Mike Colle: I want to thank the minister for her heartfelt support of this important initiative.

It is really striking for all of us who have been dealing with this legislation to see how complex this issue of adoption is, how compelling some of the cases we heard in terms of the issues that arise from family break up or attempts to adopt children. We know how complex the work was from the reports from the adoption working group and the Expert Panel on Infertility and Adoption and what they went through.

There are no easy answers, but we know that these children deserve all of our support, our understanding, because these are children who have gone through very difficult times, and this legislation removes an obstacle to them being adopted. The obstacle is called an access order. That is removed as a barrier to adoption. That, to me, is the most poignant part of this legislation in that hopefully, as a result of this legislation, these 9,000 boys and girls who are, as they say, wards of the province, who are the province's children, will be given a chance to be part of a family, and they won't have to wait year upon year and then lose hope.

This legislation gives hope to these children and also reaches out to all of us in Ontario who, in many cases, forget about the critically important action of adoption. It's a critically important decision.

I really take my hat off—and I think we all do—to all Ontarians who adopt children. They are brave, courageous and generous people who are doing the right thing, sometimes at great sacrifice. I hope that all members recognize that this bill attempts to help these children who are reaching out to us, asking to be part of a family.

I thank all the people who made deputations. I thank all the children's aid societies across Ontario who have a thankless job, but it's an essential job that they do. All the care workers and all the agencies that try to make life better for children, I want to thank them for the quiet work they do behind the scenes in very difficult circumstances.

I urge all members of the House to support this legislation as it is, as I said, a lifeline to over 9,000 Ontario boys and girls.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Further debate?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I welcome the opportunity to join in third reading debate of Bill 179, Building Families and Supporting Youth to be Successful Act.

As a member of the Standing Committee on Social Policy, I had the opportunity to participate in the public hearings, and I also want to thank all of those who presented and sent in their submissions to our committee.

There were many thoughtful suggestions that came out of those committee hearings on how we could make this

legislation stronger. I was pleased to be able to put forward amendments suggested by the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies, the Foster Care Council of Ontario, the Children in Limbo Task Force, the Provincial Advocate For Children and Youth, the Ontario Bar Association and the Expert Panel on Infertility and Adoption. That was, of course, led by our now Governor General David Johnston, and I see that one of the members is here, so thank you for participating, Mr. Falk.

The bad news is that none of those amendments were accepted by the Liberal government—just one of the amendments that our party proposed was to extend the 30-day notice of termination of access orders from 30 days to 60 days.

In the life of a child, in the life of a family, 30 days is not a long period of time, especially when you think of how important this decision is and the thought that must go into it. This places additional challenges on children's aid societies, who will be the ones trying to contact the holders of the access orders. It's a very short window for the holders of the access orders to respond. I'm supportive of extending that 30-day notice to 60 days because I believe it is necessary to give that extra window, not only to the families and the children but to the children's aid societies, who will ultimately have to do the challenging work of finding and discussing the 30-day turnaround.

Another amendment that the Progressive Conservatives proposed was to allow for parents who adopt children with special needs access to all supports and services provided by the government, things such as special services at home or the medically fragile dependent programs. I'm hearing from far too many families who have been told that, because they have adopted a child, they are not able to access some of the programs that, quite frankly, every other Ontario family would be able to if they had children with special needs. These counter-productive rules are holding back families from taking on the responsibility of adopting a special-needs child. Since the minister did not pass the amendment that the Progressive Conservatives put forward, I would like to know if the minister and her ministry have a plan for these special-needs children, to encourage the adoption of children who have special needs, who are—let's face it—the highest needs and yet currently in the lowest percentile of being adopted.

I received a letter on Monday from the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres, which was concerned that the voice of aboriginal stakeholders was not being heard with Bill 179. The Progressive Conservatives put forward an amendment that required notice be provided to a child's First Nation where there is a notice of intent to place for adoption, even if there is not a specific access order in favour of the First Nations. We also put forward an amendment to allow First Nations to make an application for an openness order, but again, that was turned down by the Liberal committee members.

If this bill truly was a priority of this government, I have to think that they would have introduced it earlier in their mandate so that we didn't have to rush through

public hearings and ultimately deal with time allocation motions—and that clause-by-clause was cut short because the House is rising later on today.

I do plan on supporting this bill, and my hope is that this bill actually makes a difference and does not fall by the wayside like Bill 210 did, where nothing is changed. There is still the same amount of crown wards in Ontario waiting to be adopted. As we know, Bill 210 was supposed to remove access orders to make it easier for crown wards to be adopted. But as we also know, this didn't happen.

I can hope that this legislation will make it possible for children and families to move forward in the adoption process. I know there are children and families in Ontario waiting to be matched.

As I close my comments on this bill, I again want to thank the individuals and organizations who put their thoughtful suggestions forward on ways we could have strengthened this bill and made it better. It is unfortunate that we were unable to move forward on some of the those amendments, but as I say, I guess small steps are a small victory.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Further debate?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Just for the record, I'm going to share my time with the member from Beaches–East York.

I wanted to participate in this debate because I think it's indicative of what we're about to see here. There is a very strong suggestion today that this House is going to be proroguing later on this afternoon. I just want, for the record, to say that I hope that's not the case. I hope that the government is not trying to escape yet another question period. If we're actually proroguing the House today so that there is no question period tomorrow, I think it says volumes about this government and its wont to get away from the scrutiny that, quite frankly, the public deserves and that democracy calls for. I hope I'm wrong. I really hope I'm wrong. I hope that the rumours that are going around today in regard to what—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): The member for Timmins–James Bay, we're going to debate the bill? There will be something about the bill? Thank you.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I'm absolutely going to debate the bill, Mr. Speaker, because this bill is at third reading, and it's going to need royal assent. I understand that the Lieutenant Governor, thank God, will be called on to give assent to this bill in the House today, but the strong indications on all of the discussions that we've been hearing coming from the government side is that they will be proroguing the House at the end of the day. I want to say, on behalf of all citizens of this province and on behalf of Andrea Horwath and New Democrats, that we think it is despicable if the government uses an opportunity to prorogue the House to get out from one question period, because tomorrow at question period we may want to ask questions about this particular bill, we may want to ask questions about matters that are important to

the people of Ontario, and the people of Ontario have the right to have their questions asked and their questions answered.

1630

I just say to this government, if this is what the beginning of this election cycle will look like, I think that you're in for a rough ride come this fall.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): The member for Beaches–East York.

Mr. Michael Prue: At the outset, I want to state that New Democrats will be supporting this bill, because the purpose is to facilitate the adoption of crown wards, building forever families. When we talked about this bill in the House, when we talked about this bill in committee, it was very clear that there are 9,000 crown wards, children, our responsibility, the state's children, who desperately want and need to have a home of their own.

As I said during second reading, I was a member of the board of the Children's Aid Society of Toronto for a number of years while I was the mayor of the borough of East York. I know, through those meetings and my meetings with the staff, with some of the foster parents, with some of the children, that the entire issue is an emotive one. It is not easy to take children away from their parents. It's not easy to try to arrange for new families. It's not easy to go to courts and deal with judges and lawyers about the safety and all the aspects of bringing up a child.

It's not easy, I think, if you are a parent and have your child taken away from you. You know of the anger, you know of the dismay that overcomes these people, and you know that some of those families and some of those people feel that their forever families have been destroyed in the process; their reputations have been destroyed. Some of them take literally years trying to get their children reunited with them and bring them back together. It is with that in mind that I supported the second reading and awaited detailed public input and the clause-by-clause.

The expert panel, I think, put it right—and I want to read it for the record again; I did read it at second reading as well. The expert panel stated, and I quote in its entirety from the paragraph: "Former crown wards who age out of the system are less likely to finish high school, more likely to become parents themselves at a young age, more likely to be users of the mental health system, more likely to require social assistance, more likely to rely on homeless shelters, to experience poverty as adults and more likely to be in conflict with the law. The long-term costs to society when children do not have permanent homes are staggering. The human costs, in terms of personal suffering and unfulfilled potential, are heart-breaking."

It was with that in mind that I think all of us from all parties attended the committee hearings. I want to say that we had two very difficult days of hearings, which lasted many hours. People were given 10 minutes to come forward and to say what was on their heart. Of

course we had people from the children's aid society; of course we had experts and lawyers and social workers and others who came forward to give us their best advice. But we also had a great many people, angry people: parents whose children had been taken away from them by children's aid societies over the last number of years, children who had been literally taken away from their parents and from their siblings to be in the care of the children's aid society and become crown wards.

There was one young woman who came to us and told a horrific story, and when I looked around, I saw members on all sides with lumps in their throats and tears in their eyes. I do know that the member from Burlington was particularly moved by what this young woman had to say. She had been taken from her family, a family she thought was a loving family, from parents who took her weekly to church. She was taken because there was a complaint, an unfounded complaint, about her mother and how she was being treated. During the period that she was put into a foster home and then in a group home, she had a whole bunch of experiences that she had hoped she would never have to suffer in her life. She was abused in that home. The kids took drugs; she took drugs with them, although she had never done that before. When she wanted to go to church on Sunday, she was denied the opportunity because they were afraid that she would see her parents.

I asked her, in the little bit of time you're given to ask a question, what happened. She said that thankfully, at the end of four months, she was called before a judge—her parents were there, the children's aid society was there—and the judge in his wisdom determined that she should go home to her parents; and that she was thankful forever after that she had that opportunity to go home.

We heard those stories. It brought it all back to me. I asked questions of each and every person where I had the opportunity: What was the problem that they most felt? Was it with this particular bill or was it with the whole adoption procedure? Was it with the children's aid society? What they told us was that the problem is that many of them felt that this was a law unto and of itself, that people could be taken away, they could be kept in a home which was not theirs, they could be put into a group home; they would literally in many cases have to fight for years, sometimes, to get their children back. Many of them discussed that this doesn't happen to families who are well off or well-connected; this happens predominantly to poorer families. This happens to people without the resources to mount the kinds of fights that are necessary.

I think that this government, in order to assuage the fears, would have been wise last week or a couple of weeks ago to have acceded to the bill that was put forward by my colleague from Trinity-Spadina, asking for Ombudsman oversight over children's aid societies. We need to make sure that, when families are yanked apart, when processes are brought to bear, everything is done in a way that is above reproach. The law has to be seen as fair not only to the child, but to the families and

to the prospective people who may adopt them. We need to have an oversight which is not there.

I say that as a person who himself spent some five or six years on the board of the Children's Aid Society of Toronto. I do know that the meetings we held oftentimes would talk about court cases, oftentimes would talk about children who had died in care, oftentimes would talk about horrific situations or those that had found their way into the press. I wish that this could have been contained within the body of this bill, but it was not.

I told you at the beginning that we are going to support this bill. We are going to vote for it in spite of what I think were the flaws that were contained within the bill and how it not only could have been just a good bill, but a great bill, had there been any movement on the government side whatsoever.

I do know that when we listened to these people and their impassioned pleas, when we listened to lawyers, experts, Mr. Elman and all of the people who came before us, they asked for things that were not and are not and cannot be contained within this bill. Just to reiterate what some of those were and what we in the NDP tried to do, along with my colleagues from the Progressive Conservatives—there were a great many amendments that were put forward, each and every one of which was shut down, each and every one of which was not being considered at all—one of them was to allow a child who is in foster care prior to his or her 18th birthday to stay in care after their 18th birthday. We heard this from literally every person who came in front of us. Every single one who came before us said that if the child is happy in foster care, they ought to be allowed to remain there. I reminded the members opposite in the Liberal Party of how many of them as parents expect, on the 18th birthday, that their child will suddenly be told, "You can't stay here anymore"? That doesn't happen. And these are our children; these are the children of the state. Should we expect any less of those children than we would expect of our own? I think not.

1640

I do know that the issue was discussed during the committee hearings and fits into the general theme that all people who came before us wanted to talk about. I know, as well, that the second motion that was put forward by the Progressive Conservatives and by the NDP—they were identical motions—was to change the definition of "child" to 18 from the current 16. Changing the definition of "child" was requested by the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, among other stakeholders, and would ensure that the law was not in conflict with literally every other law in Ontario. Mr. Elman himself asked that we change it from 16 to 18. He said that the current age of 16 is inconsistent with other provincial legislation. Just to give the government members some of the discussion that went on, the Education Act, the Age of Majority and Accountability Act and the Children's Law Reform Act all set out 18.

You know, when opposition parties tried to point this out and tried to make the bill better and make it 18, five

hands went up on the other side that this couldn't happen. I don't know how many of you think that 16-year-olds are adults. I do think that everything we do in this province sets out, at a minimum, that a child will be 18. We know you have to be 18 to join the army. We know you have to be 19 to drink. We know you have to be 18 to vote. We know that in every other act it's 18 except when it comes to children's aid and adoptions and this bill; it's left at 16. We don't think that was a wise thing to have happen.

There was another provision that concerned us a lot. The Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth recommended that there be changes to extend care maintenance to be provided to youth who were receiving care prior to their 16th birthday—regardless of whether or not it happened—until they were 18. Again, that was not accepted.

There were discussions around First Nations. I take the minister at her word when she says there are ongoing discussions, but those ongoing discussions are a very recent derivation. They only came about in the time period of this particular bill, which is only two to three weeks. I do know that we have good people within the First Nations communities who are coming forward to give some advice on how to deal with children in care who are members of First Nations communities.

But when we started to talk about how you deal with them, how this was going to unfold, and tried to put in some safeguards—I think one of the key ones was that the band itself or the community itself had to be notified when a child was going to be taken into care in order to see whether there was someone else within the extended community who might want to or could be able to do it better—that motion was not allowed. It would seem to me that that is not inconsistent with what is being recommended by the First Nations themselves.

I do know that we got letters from First Nations communities, from lawyers, from social workers in First Nations communities asking to us kill the bill for this very reason alone. I know they were very upset, and I know they remain upset.

As well, we asked about the 30-day notice. The 30-day notice does not seem to fit in very well with what may be happening in many First Nations communities. I tried to speak, during the committee hearings, about First Nations communities, particularly those in the Far North. For those of you who have had an opportunity to travel—I hope that most of you have—into areas in northern Ontario around the Ring of Fire or up on to the Hudson's or James Bay coast into Treaty 9 or Treaty 3 areas, you will know that many people live a traditional lifestyle. It is not uncommon for parents, particularly fathers, to leave for extended periods of time to go into the bush at hunting time or to go up to the coast in times of fishing or when the birds are migrating. Oftentimes they go away for 30 or 40 or 50 or 60 days in order to get the food necessary to feed their families, and it is not uncommon that they are separated from their children during that period of time, who are usually in the care of elders. We wondered why the government was so insistent upon a

30-day time frame and how that, in fact, might cause some irreparable harm to people in First Nations communities. It was but one example we gave, and yet nothing was done. All that was said by this government was, "We are in consultation." Well, I don't think that the government should have necessarily been—they should have done the consultation first. They should have had the First Nations people onside before, rather than have the bill come forward in its present form and rather than pushing it through without the safeguards that we in the New Democratic Party and my colleagues in the Progressive Conservatives were asking for.

This is a difficult bill. It's a necessary bill, but it's a difficult one. We are trying to do the best we can to build forever families for 9,000 children. We are trying to do the best we can to assuage the fears of those people who have been or believe they have been harshly dealt with by the justice system and by the children's aid society. We are trying to do all of those things to find that fine and wonderful balance that will help the majority of people. But it is difficult to do that when good ideas are not accepted, when government and the parliamentary assistant stand up and simply say, "No, we're not going to be voting for this provision," and the rationale behind the non-vote is sometimes very difficult to discern.

I am standing here to say we will vote for it. I am doing so, though, with a heavy heart, because I understand that over the course of the months and years that follow, should this pass—and I assume that it will—and should the Lieutenant Governor come here at 5:30 to grant royal assent, as has been rumoured for hours, we may find ourselves without all of the right answers. This has been rushed. This has not been done with the consent or consensus of a great many people who are being affected. This is still the subject of much ongoing discussion and it may not be right. I vote for it acknowledging all of that. I would hope that the minister would acknowledge the same—that this may be a problematic bill, and if it is, I would hope that whoever sits on the government side following the October 6 election will do whatever is necessary to fix those holes. One of the largest holes, of course, to conclude, is that, in spite of the recommendations of the committee that made the initial recommendations, there has been no money put forward, although I understand that this too is being discussed.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Further debate? Does any other member wish to speak?

Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 19, 2011, I am now required to put the question. Ms. Broten has moved third reading of Bill 179, An Act to amend the Child and Family Services Act respecting adoption and the provision of care and maintenance. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1649 to 1654.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): All those in favour, please rise one at a time until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Aggelonitis, Sophia
Albanese, Laura
Arthurs, Wayne
Balkissoon, Bas
Bentley, Christopher
Berardinetti, Lorenzo
Best, Margaret
Bisson, Gilles
Bradley, James J.
Broten, Laurel C.
Brown, Michael A.
Brownell, Jim
Carroll, Aileen
Chiarelli, Bob
Chudleigh, Ted
Clark, Steve
Colle, Mike
Dickson, Joe
Dombrowsky, Leona
Duguid, Brad
Elliott, Christine
Flynn, Kevin Daniel
Gerretsen, John

Gélinas, France
Hampton, Howard
Hoskins, Eric
Hoy, Pat
Jaczek, Helena
Jeffrey, Linda
Johnson, Rick
Jones, Sylvia
Klees, Frank
Kormos, Peter
Lalonde, Jean-Marc
Leal, Jeff
Levac, Dave
MacLeod, Lisa
Mangat, Amrit
Marchese, Rosario
Martiniuk, Gerry
Matthews, Deborah
Mauro, Bill
McMeekin, Ted
McNeely, Phil
Miller, Paul
Mitchell, Carol

Moridi, Reza
Murdoch, Bill
Oraziotti, David
Phillips, Gerry
Prue, Michael
Ramal, Khalil
Ramsay, David
Rinaldi, Lou
Ruprecht, Tony
Sandals, Liz
Savoline, Joyce
Sergio, Mario
Shurman, Peter
Smith, Monique
Sorbara, Greg
Sousa, Charles
Sterling, Norman W.
Van Bommel, Maria
Wilkinson, John
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Yakabuski, John

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): All those opposed?

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 67; the nays are 0.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Order. I have something to say that you want to hear. This is my last day in the chair.

Applause.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Order. I just want to tell you, you'll recall that a couple of weeks ago, my daughter, our grandchildren and two friends were in the Speaker's gallery when I did question period. At some point, I was just told yesterday by my friends, our daughter leaned over when I was on my feet and said, "That's the tone of voice we used to hear as kids, and he meant business."

It has been a pleasure for seven and a half years. I want to thank you for your interjections, for your advice from time to time, and all that goes with it. It's really been a privilege and an honour, and I support you and you and the rump and you.

ENSURING INTEGRITY IN ONTARIO ELECTIONS ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 ASSURANT L'INTÉGRITÉ DES ÉLECTIONS EN ONTARIO

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 30, 2011, on the motion for second reading of Bill 196, An Act to

amend the Election Act with respect to certain electoral practices / *Projet de loi 196, Loi modifiant la Loi électorale en ce qui concerne certaines manœuvres électorales.*

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Now that I've said that, I'm getting anxious to get out of here.

Pursuant to the order of the House dated June 1, 2011, I'm now required to put the question.

On May 30, 2011, Mr. Bentley moved second reading of Bill 196, An Act to amend the Election Act with respect to certain electoral practices.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Was there a no? I didn't hear the no.

Mr. Peter Kormos: If you didn't hear the no, you didn't hear it.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier): Well, we'll go on the side of caution.

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1700 to 1705.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Members please take their seats.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): You're supposed to call me the Speaker. Last night was different.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Oh, sorry.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): It's all right.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Members will please come to order.

I've never been so concerned about watching my back as I am right now.

All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

Ayes

Aggelonitis, Sophia
Albanese, Laura
Arnott, Ted
Arthurs, Wayne
Balkissoon, Bas
Bentley, Christopher
Berardinetti, Lorenzo
Best, Margaret
Bisson, Gilles
Bradley, James J.
Broten, Laurel C.
Brown, Michael A.
Brownell, Jim
Carroll, Aileen
Chiarelli, Bob
Chudleigh, Ted
Clark, Steve
Colle, Mike
Crozier, Bruce
Dickson, Joe
Dombrowsky, Leona
Duguid, Brad
Elliott, Christine
Flynn, Kevin Daniel

Gerretsen, John
Gélinas, France
Hampton, Howard
Hoskins, Eric
Hoy, Pat
Jaczek, Helena
Jeffrey, Linda
Johnson, Rick
Jones, Sylvia
Klees, Frank
Kormos, Peter
Lalonde, Jean-Marc
Leal, Jeff
Levac, Dave
MacLeod, Lisa
Mangat, Amrit
Marchese, Rosario
Martiniuk, Gerry
Matthews, Deborah
Mauro, Bill
McMeekin, Ted
McNeely, Phil
Miller, Paul
Mitchell, Carol

Moridi, Reza
Murdoch, Bill
Oraziotti, David
Phillips, Gerry
Prue, Michael
Pupatello, Sandra
Ramal, Khalil
Ramsay, David
Rinaldi, Lou
Ruprecht, Tony
Sandals, Liz
Savoline, Joyce
Sergio, Mario
Shurman, Peter
Smith, Monique
Sorbara, Greg
Sousa, Charles
Sterling, Norman W.
Takhir, Harinder S.
Van Bommel, Maria
Wilkinson, John
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Yakabuski, John

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Those opposed?

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 71; the nays are 0.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Pursuant to the order of the House dated June 1, 2011, the bill is ordered for third reading.

ENSURING INTEGRITY IN ONTARIO ELECTIONS ACT, 2011

LOI DE 2011 ASSURANT L'INTÉGRITÉ DES ÉLECTIONS EN ONTARIO

Mr. Bentley moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 196, An Act to amend the Election Act with respect to certain electoral practices / Projet de loi 196, Loi modifiant la Loi électorale en ce qui concerne certaines manoeuvres électorales.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Pursuant to the order of the House dated June 1, 2011, I am now required to put the question.

1710

Mr. Bentley has moved third reading of Bill 196, An Act to amend the Election Act with respect to certain electoral practices.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

Interjection: Same vote.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Agreed? Agreed.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 71; the nays are 0.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Orders of the day? Government House leader.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I happily move adjournment of the House.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The Minister of Community Safety will please come to order.

Just before I put the question, there's the uncertainty of whether or not the House will be sitting tomorrow. As it stands, when this place does adjourn, we will be resuming at 9 a.m., but in the event that something happens, I just want to take this opportunity to say thank you. Thank you to each and every one of you. Thank you for the service that you have provided to your constituents, to the citizens of Ontario.

There have been times that this place has been a bit raucous, but we also got to experience some really good

things last night. It was amazing what took place last night, and I thank all the members for that.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I want to thank the Clerk, Deb Deller, all the table officers, everyone from the Sergeant at Arms and his staff to the ushers, to the pages, to Hansard, to the cleaning staff, the food services staff, the grounds staff, the security. These are all individuals who quietly, behind the scenes, support us. To each and every one of those individuals we owe a big debt of gratitude and a big round of applause for all of them. Thank you.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): To all the staff who support us, whether it's in your offices or within your ministries, both the political staff and the bureaucrat staff, thank you to all of them because there's so much that goes on behind the scenes that they do day in and day out to support us, and we need to make sure that we always say thank you to them. Thank you.

With the uncertainty of whether we will be sitting or not tomorrow, the Speaker's apartment will be open following the adjournment of the House tonight, and I extend an invitation to all the members, to all the staff who are here, the staff who are watching. That invitation goes out to every staff member in this building. I don't care who you are, you are welcome to come and join us.

I just need to recognize a good friend of mine, Mark Cosens; his wife, Brigitte; and their son Aubrey, who are here. Brother Joe is racing to try and get here with nephew Nick. They may not get here—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I can't address that issue.

To the media, who sit behind me, thanks for what you do.

Interjection: They're ready to dump paper on you.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I know they are. I'm trying to rag the puck as long as possible because I'm a little concerned about it. But to the media, thank you for the work that you do reporting out of this place.

In conclusion, to those of you who aren't running again, I wish you all the best in your future endeavours, in whatever you choose to do. To those of you who are running again, I wish you all the best this fall. I want to thank each and every one of you for the privilege that you have afforded me with the opportunity to serve as the 40th Speaker in the 39th Parliament. It is a job that I will never, ever forget. It has been the greatest job that I have ever been given the opportunity to do. Everyone has been so supportive, and it has been an amazing experience. I wish everyone all the best. With that—

Mr. Peter Kormos: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I've been here for I think 23 years, and you're the only Speaker who has never named me. I don't know whether that was oversight on your part or lack of it—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Welland, Peter Kormos.

Mr. Peter Kormos: —but I thank you with great gratitude. As for the other Speakers, heck, you're head and shoulders above them.

Mr. John Yakabuski: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I've been here for eight years, not 23, and you're actually the only Speaker who has named me. And for the record, Speaker, I have to tell you that Peter Kormos—and both times have been since I was named House leader. They kind of figure that that's when you start to behave better, but anyway. Peter Kormos told me, "Yak, don't worry about it. You can't get kicked out of here unless you want to get kicked out." For the record, I have to say that I did not want to get kicked out that day. It was specifically on a day where there was this word being used—because I'm not using it for anybody else—and the word was "cover-up." It's just a word—

Interjection.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Yes, two words, or it could be used as one word. The Speaker says, "Look, the next person who uses the word 'cover-up,' I'm going to toss them"—

Mr. Jeff Leal: That was me.

Mr. John Yakabuski: And it turned out to be Jeff Leal. But about a half an hour later—I had hardly said a word—there was a question, and I said something about, "Oh, they're just trying to cover up." It had nothing to do with the conspiracy theory. In a heckle, I said, "Oh, they're just trying to cover up the fact that," and "John Yakabuski, goodbye."

You remember that? I talked to you about it and I said, "I didn't even know." I'm walking out of here and I thought—

Interjections.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Yes. The point I'm trying to make is that I was totally innocent of that. I guess the point is that even the Speaker, in his wisdom, can sometimes hear something that wasn't really intended.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): With that, just to make the honourable member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke feel a little better, I absolve you.

The government House leader has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 30-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1719 to 1720.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Ms. Smith has moved the adjournment of the House.

All those in favour will please rise and remain standing to be recorded by the Clerk.

All those opposed.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 57; the nays are 20.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): This House stands adjourned until 9 a.m. tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned at 1722.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Steve Peters

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman, Tonia Grannum

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Aggelonitis, Hon. / L'hon. Sophia (LIB)	Hamilton Mountain	Minister of Revenue / Ministre du Revenu Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Arthurs, Wayne (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (LIB)	London West / London-Ouest	Attorney General / Procureur général Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Health Promotion and Sport / Ministre de la Promotion de la santé et du Sport
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Brown, Michael A. (LIB)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Brownell, Jim (LIB)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Caplan, David (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Carroll, Hon. / L'hon. Aileen (LIB)	Barrie	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism and Culture / Ministre du Tourisme et de la Culture
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Crozier, Bruce (LIB)	Essex	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (LIB)	Prince Edward–Hastings	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (LIB)	Windsor—Tecumseh	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby—Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry / Ministre du Développement du Nord, des Mines et des Forêts
Hampton, Howard (NDP)	Kenora—Rainy River	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Hoy, Pat (LIB)	Chatham—Kent—Essex	
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West—Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest—Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges—Markham	
Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)	Brampton—Springdale	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Johnson, Rick (LIB)	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin—Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket—Aurora	
Kormos, Peter (NDP)	Welland	Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
Kular, Kuldip (LIB)	Bramalea—Gore—Malton	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Jean-Marc (LIB)	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	
Leal, Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	
Levac, Dave (LIB)	Brant	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean—Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga—Brampton South / Mississauga—Brampton-Sud	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity—Spadina	
Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Cambridge	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	
McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Premier / Premier ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
McMeekin, Ted (LIB)	Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa—Orléans	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa—Vanier	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek	
Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Mitchell, Hon. / L'hon. Carol (LIB)	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Moridi, Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
Naqvi, Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
Oraziotti, David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pendergast, Leanna (LIB)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (LIB)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (LIB)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Economic Development and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Ramal, Khalil (LIB)	London–Fanshawe	
Ramsay, David (LIB)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Ruprecht, Tony (LIB)	Davenport	
Sandals, Liz (LIB)	Guelph	
Savoline, Joyce (PC)	Burlington	
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Monique M. (LIB)	Nipissing	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Sorbara, Greg (LIB)	Vaughan	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Sterling, Norman W. (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	Deputy Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de parti reconnu
Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Van Bommel, Maria (LIB)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
Wilkinson, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Perth–Wellington	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Zimmer, David (LIB)	Willowdale	
Vacant	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	

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Rick Johnson, Sylvia Jones
Jean-Marc Lalonde, Ted McMeekin
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